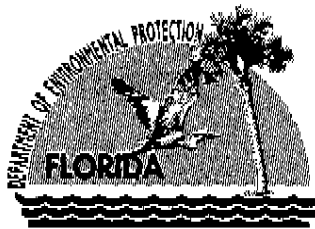


## Appendix C

### Agency Coordination and Correspondence

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- C-1 Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), Division of Recreation and Parks letter dated December 13, 2005
- C-2 Orange County Environmental Protection Division letter dated December 28, 2005
- C-3 Summary of FDEP Coordination Meeting on April 20, 2006
- C-4 Summary of FDEP Coordination Meeting on March 20, 2007\*  
\*The FDACS, Division of Forestry Supervisor for Seminole State Forest also attended
- C-5 Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), Division of Forestry letter dated July 9, 2007, with clarification email dated July 24, 2007
- C-6 Summary of FDEP Coordination Meeting on July 17, 2007
- C-7 FDEP, Division of Recreation and Parks letter dated September 6, 2007
- C-8 FDACS, Division of Forestry letter dated September 23, 2007
- C-9 Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) letter to FDACS, Division of Forestry dated October 29, 2007
- C-10 FDOT letter to FDEP, Division of Recreation and Parks letter dated October 29, 2007
- C-11 FDEP, Division of Recreation and Parks letter to FDOT dated March 20, 2008
- C-12 FDACS, Division of Forestry letter to FDOT dated May 30, 2008
- C-13 FDOT letter to FDEP, Division of Recreation and Parks dated April 21, 2009
- C-14 FDOT letter to FDACS, Division of Forestry dated April 21, 2009
- C-15 FDACS, Division of Forestry letter to FDOT dated May 27, 2009
- C-16 FDOT letter to FDACS, Division of Forestry dated May 29, 2009
- C-17 Information on Service Road Concept provided to FDACS, Division of Forestry by FDOT on February 8, 2010
- C-18 Information on Service Road Concept provided to FDEP, Division of Recreation and Parks by FDOT on February 8, 2010
- C-19 FDOT/Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority commitment letter to FDACS, Division of Forestry dated March 25, 2010
- C-20 FDEP Deputy Secretary for Lands and Recreation letter to FDOT District Five Secretary providing Section 4(f) concurrence dated March 30, 2010
- C-21 Director of FDACS, Division of Forestry letter to FDOT District Five Secretary providing Section 4(f) concurrence dated April 9, 2010



Jeb Bush  
Governor

# Department of Environmental Protection

Marjory Stoneman Douglas Building  
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000

Colleen M. Castille  
Secretary

*Handwritten signature: Mark Castille*

December 13, 2005

Mr. Mike Snyder, Executive Director  
Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority  
525 South Magnolia Avenue  
Orlando, Florida 32801

00000 00500000 000000

Dear Mr. Snyder:

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Recreation and Parks manages more than 39,100 acres of public lands within the Wekiva River Basin as part of Florida's state park system. These parks were acquired as part of a dedicated effort by State government to conserve lands for public outdoor recreation, wildlife habitat and watershed protection. We appreciate the work of the Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority to further the protection of these areas while designing the Wekiva Parkway.

The Division would like to ensure that the Wekiva Parkway is constructed without harming the state parks of the Wekiva Basin. We are concerned that some of the proposed Parkway alignments and interchange locations could require the use of state park lands or have other direct or indirect effects on the parks. To prevent impacts to the parks, we request that the alignment of the Parkway follow the existing route of State Road 46 to the greatest extent possible. We also request that the location of the primary interchange with State Road 46 is thoughtfully selected to minimize any direct and indirect effects on the park. Finally, we support the elevation of the Parkway as much as possible through the State Road 46 corridor to prevent impacts on wildlife and enhance the management of public lands within the basin. At a minimum, elevations should be incorporated in the Parkway's design wherever public lands exist on both sides.

We believe that these modifications to the plan will protect Florida's valuable state parks while meeting the transportation needs of central Florida. We welcome the opportunity to discuss our concerns with you and look forward to working with your organization as this important project progresses.

Sincerely,

Mike Bullock  
Director  
Florida Park Service

MB/agw

cc: Vivian Garfein, Director  
DEP Central District

"More Protection, Less Process"

Printed on recycled paper.



## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIVISION

**Lori Cunniff, Manager**

Leeds Commerce Center  
800 Mercy Drive, Suite 4  
Orlando, Florida 32808-7896  
407-836-1400 • Fax 407-836-1499  
www.OrangeCountyFL.net

December 28, 2005

Mr. Mark Callahan, Vice President  
CH2M Hill, Inc.  
225 East Robinson Street, Suite 505  
Orlando Florida 32801-4321

**Subject: Proposed Alignment of Wekiva Parkway**

Dear Mr. Callahan:

Thank you for meeting with Beth Jackson, Elizabeth Johnson, and me on December 1, 2005. The purpose of the meeting was to review the general aspects of the proposed alignments of the Wekiva Parkway and the potential impacts to Orange County Green PLACE properties.

The following outlines the Orange County Environmental Protection Division's (Division) opinion on the alignments:

- The Division prefers that the final alignment of the Wekiva Parkway completely avoid impacting two Green Place properties known as the Fazio Property and Strite Property.
- If the alignment is unable to avoid either of these parcels, the Division requests that the alignment avoid fragmenting the parcels.
- If the alignment is unable to avoid the Fazio Property, the Division requests that the alignment avoid impacting the onsite portion of Lake Lucie.
- The Division requests that the road alignment avoids impacts to the seepage springs located on the parcel north of the Strite Property that is currently owned by the Strite Family.
- The Division requests that the alignment through the Neighborhood Lakes parcel should be located to a more westerly alignment in order to avoid impacts to the Rock Springs Preserve.
- The Division would like to go on record that the preferred alignment is Green OC 17.

We hope this information is helpful to you during the planning and preliminary design phases of this project. If you have any specific questions, please contact me at (407) 836-1405 or Beth Jackson at (407) 836-1481.

Sincerely,

Lori Cunniff, CEP  
Manager

BJ/ERJ/LC: rb

c: Elizabeth R. Johnson, Environmental Supervisor, Environmental Protection Division  
Beth Jackson, Program Manager, Environmental Protection Division



Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services  
CHARLES H. BRONSON, Commissioner  
The Capitol • Tallahassee, FL 32399-0800  
www.doacs.state.fl.us

Please Respond to:

Division of Forestry  
Forest Management Bureau  
3125 Conner Blvd. C-25  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1650  
Telephone: (850) 488-6611  
Fax: (850) 921-6724

July 9, 2007

George Lovett  
Director of Transportation Development  
Florida Department of Transportation, District V  
719 South Woodland Boulevard MS 503  
Deland, Florida 32720-6834

RECEIVED

JUL 13 2007

CH2M HILL/ORL

Dear Mr. Lovett,

The Division of Forestry (Division) has reviewed the alignment alternatives for the Wekiva Parkway that were presented for public preview in the Summer of 2006 and at the Environmental Advisory Committee meeting in February 2007. Seminole State Forest (SSF), which is managed by the Division, will be impacted by the Wekiva Parkway as indicated in the current alternatives. The following comments are provided to indicate the Division's preferred alternatives, note any concerns and to address potential mitigation or land exchanges.

#### Lake County East CR46A Realignment

Preferred alternative for the Lake County East CR46A Realignment is Alternative 2. This realignment does not directly impact SSF other than to change the route used to access existing gates. The Division recommends the closure of the portions of CR46A that are not needed for local access. The Division does not support Alternative 1C that crosses the western portion of SSF or Alternative 1D which leaves in place a significant impediment to the western wildlife corridor.

#### Lake County East Local Access

Of the five Alternatives provided for the Lake County East Local Access, Alternative 5 is preferred. This alternative is desirable as it closely follows the footprint of the existing SR46. The two full diamond interchanges of Alternative 5 allow for the closure of SR46 adjacent to the central bridged area. This central bridged area is in the location of the first wildlife crossing installed on SR46 and represents the most frequently used wildlife corridor between SSF and Rock Springs Run State Reserve. The Division recommends the closure and removal of the portions of the existing SR46 that would no longer be needed for local access, in order to facilitate wildlife crossing.



Florida Agriculture and Forest Products  
\$87 Billion for Florida's Economy



George Lovett  
Director of Transportation Development  
Florida Department of Transportation  
July 9, 2007  
Page 2

Alternative 5 depicts a retention pond on approximately five acres just to the west of the Wekiva River. This parcel is surrounded by Seminole State Forest with ownership being approximately half private (Smialek) and half DOT. This parcel would be valuable to acquire as part of SSF to smooth out the southern boundary. The Division does not support the location of a retention pond on this parcel or on any adjacent public lands but would favor the use of natural flow conveyances.

Seminole staff members have worked with the representatives from the consultant CH2MHILL regarding maintaining current access to SSF. Lake County East Local Access Alternative 5 will not alter current access points. All of the alternatives being considered will allow safer public access to the south entrance of the forest. The Division requests that appropriate signage be installed to direct the public to the main south forest entrance currently located on the north side of SR46, opposite the intersection with Wekiva River Road.

#### Mitigation

The Division suggests that replacement acreage be provided for any portions of SSF that are used for Wekiva Parkway construction. This suggested replacement acreage should be within the Wekiva-Ocala Connector area and within the optimal boundary established for SSF. There are two small parcels of Seminole State Forest that are situated between CR46A and SR46 that would be impacted by nearly all of the alternatives. The Division recommends that DOT work with the Division of State Lands within the Department of Environmental Protection to replace the acres impacted from this project and add acres back to SSF.

All roadway designs should consider minimizing the necessity to move the gas line easement that parallels the existing SR46 further into the adjacent public lands.

If portions of CR46A and SR46 are closed, it is recommended that management of the closed sections be assigned to the adjacent public lands. Where practical, mitigating the restoration of the abandoned right-of-way to natural grade and replacement of vegetation along the closed road section would greatly improve wildlife movement.

George Lovett  
Director of Transportation Development  
Florida Department of Transportation  
July 9, 2007  
Page 3

Given the potential for dangerous wildfires in this area and the difficulties that an elevated and non-elevated high-speed highway will cause for prescribed burning, mitigation should include permanent electronic warning signs equipped with remote sensing weather stations to be located at strategic points along the parkway route that passes through or adjacent to the public lands.

The location of the signs needs to be accessible by the Division of Forestry or other emergency management agencies for warning of smoke on the highway and lowering of the speed limit during severe events in order to protect public safety. This suggested mitigation would be the minimum acceptable since the department of Environmental Protection and/or the Board of Trustees may have additional mitigation criteria associated with the impacts to conservation lands.

The Division of Forestry supports the recommendations from the Wekiva Coalition as it relates to this project. The Division welcomes the opportunity to continue to work with the Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority throughout the parkway planning and construction phases to ensure that impacts to Seminole State Forest are minimized. The Forest is a fundamental link for the wildlife corridor between the Wekiva Basin and the Ocala National Forest. Every effort should be taken to preserve this link and to reduce barriers to wildlife movement.

Sincerely,

**CHARLES H. BRONSON**  
**COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Long". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mike" and last name "Long" clearly distinguishable.

Mike Long, Director  
Division of Forestry

cc Mike Snyder, Orlando – Orange County Expressway Authority  
Mark Callahan, CH2MHILL  
Winnie Schreiber, Withlacoochee Forestry Center Manager  
Joe Bishop, Forestry Supervisor II, SSF  
Dennis Hardin, Forest Ecologist

**From:** Callahan, Mark/ORL  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 24, 2007 6:17 PM  
**To:** Stewart, Linda  
**Cc:** Stivender, Jim - Lake County; brian.stanger@dot.state.fl.us; Lewis, David/ORL  
**Subject:** FW: CR 46A

**Attachments:** C-5 CR46A All Align Graphic.pdf; M Long Ltr 7-9-07.pdf  
[Clarification from Division of Forestry.](#)

---

**From:** Lewis, David/ORL  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 24, 2007 6:12 PM  
**To:** Callahan, Mark/ORL  
**Subject:** FW: CR 46A

[For your response to Comm. Stewart.](#)

---

**From:** Bishop, Joe [mailto:bishopj@doacs.state.fl.us]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 24, 2007 6:07 PM  
**To:** Lewis, David/ORL  
**Cc:** Long, Mike; Hardin, Dennis; Schreiber, Winnie; Mousel, Keith; Lovett, Ray  
**Subject:** RE: CR 46A

Dave,

The reference to CR46A Realignment Alternative 2 in Mike Long's letter should have indicated Alternative 1A. The reference to Alternative 2 was from the older concept. The desire of the Division is to have the CR46A realignment are far to the west of the forest as possible and for the south widening of SR46.

Joe Bishop  
 Forestry Supervisor II  
 Seminole State Forest  
 Division of Forestry  
 9610 CR44  
 Leesburg, FL 34788  
 Office) 352-360-6677  
 Suncom) 668-6677  
 Fax) 352-315-4488

-----Original Message-----

**From:** David.Lewis2@CH2M.com [mailto:David.Lewis2@CH2M.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 24, 2007 5:27 PM  
**To:** Bishop, Joe  
**Cc:** mark.callahan@ch2m.com  
**Subject:** CR 46A

Joe:

In Mike Long's July 9, 2007 letter to George Lovett, his reference to CR 46A Realignment **Alternative 2** (highlighted in the attachment) has created some confusion among other stakeholders. That is an older alternative concept which would widen SR 46 to the south in the area of the CR 46A intersection. With the acquisition of Neighborhood Lakes, all concepts for some time now have shown the south widening of SR 46 under Alternative 1; you will recall as you review the attached graphic that we have been evaluating and discussing options for the realignment of Alternative 1 over the past months. Indeed, Mr. Long's letter indicates the Division of Forestry opposes Alternatives 1C and 1D, so I think what he meant to say is Alternative 1A or other similar alignment further to the west away from the Seminole State Forest would be preferable. See the excerpt below from the March 20, 2007 meeting with you and FDEP\*.

Please confirm, at your earliest convenience, that the reference in the letter to the older Alternative 2 was actually meant to indicate the Division of Forestry's preference for a CR 46A realignment alternative further to the west, such as Alternative 1A, with SR 46 widening to the south.

Thank you,

Dave

\*Lake County: CR 46A Realignment

*Mr. Callahan, referring to aerial based concept display boards, discussed the CR 46A Realignment alternatives. He said the west right-of-way line for Alternative 1 is on the property line of Scott Taylor's land and the Heathrow County Estates development. Other alternatives developed at the request of the Heathrow Country Estates Homeowners Association include: Alternative 1A - 50 feet east of the property line; Alternative 1B - 800 feet east of the property line; Alternative 1C - 2,700 feet east of the property line and into the Seminole State Forest; and Alternative 1D - along the existing CR 46A alignment through the Seminole State Forest. Mr. Callahan indicated he had told the Homeowners Association that Alternatives 1C and 1D are inconsistent with the Wekiva Parkway and Protection Act and he could not recommend either of them. Otherwise, Alternatives 1, 1A and 1B are acceptable and the landowners will be asked to decide which one is mutually agreeable. Someone on the phone from Tallahassee indicated FDEP would prefer Alternative 1 in light of acquisition discussions with landowner Scott Taylor for property to the north. The FDEP representatives and Joe Bishop indicated a letter would be prepared strongly objecting to Alternatives 1C and 1D.*





# Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Marjory Stoneman Douglas Building  
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000

Charlie Crist  
Governor

Jeff Kottkamp  
Lt. Governor

Michael W. Sole  
Secretary

September 6, 2007

Mr. Brian Stanger  
Florida Department of Transportation – District 5  
719 South Woodland Boulevard, MS 501  
DeLand, Florida 32720

Dear Mr. Stanger:

The Division of Recreation and Parks has been working with the coordination agencies involved in the planning of the Wekiva Parkway/State Road 46 Realignment to identify, minimize, mitigate, and monitor any negative effects of this project. Significant resources managed by the Division are within the planning boundary of the project and include Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park (LWRPSP) and Rock Springs Run State Reserve (RSRSP). This letter provides a context to understand their significance and the role they play in providing outdoor recreational opportunities and protecting the environmentally and ecologically sensitive Wekiva River Basin.

LWRPSP and RSRPSP are managed along with Wekiwa Springs State Park, as one operational unit and collectively referred to as the Wekiva River Basin State Parks. Title to the parks is held by the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund (Trustees) of the State of Florida. The parks were purchased using EEL Bonds and P2000/CARL funding sources. LWRPSP is managed by the Division of Recreation and Parks under lease number 2950. RSRSP is managed under multiple agency management lease number 3571, with the Division of Recreation and Parks as lead agency. Other agencies involved in the management of this property include the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Division of Forestry and St. Johns River Water Management District. The basic policy and direction of management for both properties is contained in the approved *Wekiva Basin Parks Multi-Unit Management Plan* of April 22, 2005. The primary purpose of both parks is resource-based outdoor recreation and conservation.

The Wekiva River Basin State Parks are an important component of the Florida state park system. The parks are also part of a regional network of conservation lands known as the Wekiva-Ocala Greenway, a continuous natural corridor spanning from Orlando to the Ocala National Forest, and comprise the major portion of the Wekiva River Protection Area as defined by Chapter 369, Part II, Florida Statutes. Lands within this area provide essential wildlife habitat and critical water recharge and water quality functions within the rapidly growing Orlando metropolitan area.

The significance of park resources is reflected in a number of state and national designations associated with both LWRPSP and RSRPSP. The Wekiva River and portions of its tributaries,

including Rock Springs Run, were designated a National Wild and Scenic River by the U.S. Department of Interior in October 2000. Park waters are designated Outstanding Florida Waters pursuant to Chapter 62-302 F.A.C., due to their special natural attributes. Wekiwa Springs Run, Wekiva River and portions of Blackwater Creek are a Florida Aquatic Preserve under the Florida Aquatic Preserve Act of 1975, section 258.35, Florida Statutes. RSRSR is established as a Type I Wildlife Management Area as defined by 39-14.002, Florida Administrative Code. The parks are also a component of the Florida Greenways and Trails System.

Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park is located in Lake and Seminole Counties and stretches north approximately 12 miles from State Road 46 up to the Ocala National Forest. The Preserve lies between State Road 44 and the Seminole State Forest to the west and the St. Johns River to the east. The lower four miles of the Wekiva River and Black Water Creek cut through the southern portion of the park.

LWRPSP is comprised of approximately 17,405 acres and includes the state-imperiled floodplain marsh, scrub and sandhill natural communities. The latter is located along the State Road 46 frontage. Listed animal species recorded at the park include the Florida black bear, gopher tortoise, and Florida scrub-jay. The park also includes 10 cultural sites included in the Florida State Master Site File.

Public access to LWRPSP is provided at three locations. The northern entrance to the park is located off State Road 44 in Pine Lakes and provides access to equestrian facilities. The southern entrance is located on State Road 46, east of the Wekiva River Bridge and provides access to the Sand Hill Nature Trail. Katie's Landing is located on Wekiva Park Drive, one mile north of State Road 46 and provides access to the Wekiva River.

LWRPSP provides opportunities for horseback riding, hiking, mountain biking, primitive camping, fishing, paddling and nature observation. Visitor use is focused on the trail system that includes 23 miles of service roads and 18 miles of dedicated trails for horseback riding, hiking and biking. A portion of the Florida National Scenic Trail is located at the southern end of the park and the property is a designated stop on the East Section of the Great Florida Birding Trail. A trailhead and equestrian camping area with stalls, corrals and restroom is located at the north entrance of the park. The southern entrance provides trailhead access for hiking and a canoe/kayak launch on the Wekiva River is located at Katie's Landing.

Rock Springs Run State Reserve is located in Orange and Lake Counties. The park is bounded on the north by State Road 46, the Wekiva River Mitigation Bank, and a small number of rural residential parcels in Lake County, and on the east by the Wekiva River up to the abandoned Seaboard Coastline Railroad, and by Wekiva River Road from the former railroad line north to State Road 46. Wekiwa Springs State Park is adjacent to the Reserve on the southwestern boundary, separated by Rock Springs Run, and the recently acquired Neighborhood Lakes property forms the northwestern boundary. The Seminole State Forest and LWRPSP are located immediately north of State Road 46. The entrance to RSRSR is located on State Road 46 at the beginning of the road formerly known as County Road 433, approximately 3 miles west of the Wekiva River.

RSRPSP is comprised of approximately 14,011 acres and includes the state-imperiled floodplain marsh, sandhill, sandhill upland lake and scrub natural communities. Both scrub and sandhill are located along the State Road 46 frontage. Listed animal species recorded at the park include the Florida black bear, Florida scrub-jay, striped newt and gopher tortoise. The park also

Mr. Brian Stanger

Page 3

September 6, 2004

contains 17 cultural sites listed in the Florida State Master Site File, including a National Register site, Twin Mounds Archaeological District, and a historic cemetery, Ethel, the oldest known cemetery in Lake County.

RSRPSP provides opportunities for horseback riding, hiking, mountain biking, primitive camping, fishing, paddling and nature observation. Limited hunting is permitted within the Wildlife Management Area and is managed by the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Visitor use is focused on the trail system that includes 14 miles of hiking trails, 17 miles of equestrian trails, 15 miles of biking trails, and 32 miles of multi-use trails. A trail head kiosk is located on the main paved entrance road. Other public facilities include an equestrian concession and restroom.

As one can see, both LWRPSP and RSRSR provide numerous ecological and recreation benefits on a local, regional, state and even national level. The parks are truly significant in the conservation benefits and the resource-based recreation opportunities they provide. The Wekiva River Basin State Parks are important assets of the Florida state park system. It is imperative that their resource values are not diminished for future generations to enjoy.

This letter, as requested, has been provided for documentation required for the evaluation and Determination of Section 4(f) Applicability on the Wekiva Parkway/SR 46 Realignment PD&E Study. Please let me know should you have any questions or need any additional information.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Kinnison". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Michael Kinnison, GOC II  
Office of Park Planning  
Division of Recreation and Parks

cc: Larry Fooks  
Cliff Maxwell  
John Fillyaw

*Wekiva Parkway Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study*  
**Potential Section 4(f) Resource Questionnaire**

---

Attn:

John Fillyaw  
Park Manager,  
Rock Springs Run State Reserve

Sir,

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority are conducting a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study for the Wekiva Parkway/SR 46 Bypass project. The project includes the following components:

- ***The Wekiva Parkway***, a 4-lane divided (expandable to 6-lane divided) limited access facility, which would begin in Orange County at US 441 just west of CR 437 and extend to the north/northeast into Lake County, turning east and crossing the Wekiva River into Seminole County and terminating at I-4.
- ***SR 46 Reconstruction and Realignment*** which would begin at the SR 46/US 441 interchange in Lake County and extend east to the vicinity of Round Lake Road, then turning southeast on a new alignment entering Orange County with an interchange connection at the Wekiva Parkway. It is expected that the SR 46 improvements would provide 4-lane divided (expandable to 6-lane divided) controlled access along the existing alignment from US 441 to the vicinity of Round Lake Road, while the remaining alignment to the southeast is expected to be limited access.
- ***CR 46A Realignment***, a 2 lane rural (expandable to 4 lane rural) roadway, which would begin on CR 46A in Lake County near the Heathrow Gatwick development area and extend to the south-southeast on a new alignment and tie into existing SR 46 with an access connection to the Wekiva Parkway. The approximate length of the CR 46A realignment is 2.72 miles.
- ***Wekiva Parkway Access Improvements*** would be required in Lake County between the realignment of CR 46A and the Wekiva River to allow access to the private property along existing SR 46. It is proposed that the Wekiva Parkway would carry all traffic crossing between Seminole and Lake Counties and provisions for access would be required for several properties in this area of Lake County.

As part of this study, we need your help in obtaining some information regarding the publicly-owned facilities within the study corridor, in this case, Rock Springs Run State Reserve. It would be very helpful if you could provide us with the answers to the following questions regarding the above-mentioned property.



---

1. What is the location and size of the property?

Rock Springs Run State Reserve is located in Orange and Lake Counties. The Reserve is bounded on the north by State Road 46, the Wekiva River Mitigation Bank, and a small number of rural residential parcels in Lake County, and on the east by the Wekiva River up to the abandoned Seaboard Coastline Railroad, and by Wekiva River Road from the former railroad line north to State Road 46. Wekiwa Springs State Park is adjacent to the Reserve on the southwestern boundary, separated by Rock Springs Run, and the recently acquired Neighborhood Lakes property forms the northwestern boundary. The Seminole State Forest and Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park are located immediately north of State Road 46.

2. What is the current and undeveloped acreage of the property?

The Reserve is currently comprised of approximately 14,011 acres. Roughly 15 acres have been developed with facilities. This does not include portions of the property that may contain improved pasture.

3. Who owns the property and who is responsible for maintenance?

On March 10, 1983 the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund (Trustees) obtained fee simple title to the property that became Rock Springs Run State Reserve. The Trustees conveyed management authority under the Multiple Agency Management No. 3571 (originally Lease No. 745-9008). The lead managing agency is FDEP Division of Recreation and Parks (Division). Other agencies included in the management of the Reserve are the Division of Forestry, the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and St. Johns River Water Management District.

Rock Springs Run State Reserve, Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park, and Wekiwa Springs State Park are managed collectively as one operational unit by the Division and referred to as the Wekiva River Basin Parks. The basic policy and direction of management for these properties is contained in the approved *Wekiva Basin Parks Multi-Unit Management Plan* of April 22, 2005.

4. What type of facility is it and what is the overall function of or the available activities (i.e., ball playing, swimming, boating, etc.) on the property?

Rock Springs Run State Reserve is a unit of the Florida State Park system managed for the primary purpose of resource-based outdoor recreation and conservation. The Reserve is also a Type I Wildlife Management Area. The Reserve is part of the Wekiva River basin, whose waterways and associated lands in central Florida comprise some of the most prized natural assets of the state. The Reserve has regional, state and national significance for the conservation and recreational values it provides. The property functions as a habitat preserve for many listed species, including Florida black bear, Florida scrub-jay, striped newt and gopher tortoise, natural buffer to a National Wild and Scenic River and Florida Aquatic Preserve, and source of high-quality resource based recreational opportunities.

The Reserve provides opportunities for horseback riding, hiking, mountain biking, primitive camping, fishing, paddling and nature observation. Limited hunting is permitted within the Wildlife Management Area and is managed by the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Visitor use is focused on the Reserve trail system that includes 14 miles of hiking trails, 17 miles of equestrian trails, 15 miles of biking trails, and 32 miles of multi-use trails. A trail head kiosk is located on the main paved entrance road. Other public facilities include an equestrian concession and restroom.

Support facilities include a ranger residence, a volunteer residence site, an old hunt cabin, shop and an office.

5. Is parking provided? If so, how many spaces are allocated?

Parking is provided at three trailheads, the restroom and the horse barn facility. With the exception of the restroom, which contains two accessible parking spots, all parking is in grassed, hard packed areas but is not formally marked. Each area can hold ten to twelve vehicles.

6. Are there any plans for proposed facilities? Are there any descriptions and/or maps of the facility available?

The River House, a former residence with stables located on the Wekiva River, is planned to be used for a bed and breakfast. Improvements to the house are complete, a concessionaire under contract and permits are being pursued. The house is located about 1.5 miles south of the Wekiva River Bridge on State Road 46.

7. What type of access (pedestrian and vehicular) is provided to the facility? What is the approximate number of visitors to the property per year?

Vehicular access to Rock Springs Run State Reserve is located on State Road 46 at the beginning of the road formerly known as County Road 433, approximately 3 miles west of the Wekiva River.

Reserve visitation for the last three years has averaged 15,000 visitors per year.

8. What is the relationship to other similarly used lands in the vicinity?

Rock Springs Run State Reserve is part of the Wekiva-Ocala Greenway, a continuous natural corridor spanning from Orlando to the Ocala National Forest. The Greenway is an important refuge for the Florida black bear, as well as other wildlife such as the bald eagle, swallow-tailed kite, Florida scrub-jay and wading birds. Located within the Wekiva and St. Johns River basins, the Greenway also serves an important water quality protection function. Importantly, it provides the metro-Orlando area with a large, accessible natural area to enjoy an abundance of outdoor recreation opportunities. Public conservation lands currently included in the Wekiva-Ocala Greenway are the Wekiva River Buffer Conservation Area, Wekiwa Springs State Park, Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park, Seminole State Forest, Black Bear Wilderness Area, Hontoon Island State Park, Blue Spring State Park, and most recently Neighborhood Lakes.

9. Are there any utility crossings?

None that we are aware of.

10. Are there any known clauses that affect the ownership or jurisdiction of this property (i.e., lease, easement, covenants, restrictions, etc.)?

Special Conditions on Use: Rock Springs Run State Reserve must be managed in accordance with the Multiple Agency Management's lease agreement with the Trustees.

Following is a list of outstanding rights, reservations, and encumbrances that apply to Rock Springs Run State Reserve, as described in the *Multi-use Management Plan*.

Instrument: Quit-Claim Deed  
Instrument Holder: STS Land Associates, L.P.  
Beginning Date: October 24, 1991  
Ending Date: Indefinite  
Outstanding Rights, Uses, Etc.:

**Exhibit "A":**

1. Railroad right-of-way of a parcel of land lying in Sections 29, 30, 32, and 33, Township 19 South, Range 29 East, Lake County, Florida, being more particularly described in the quit-claim deed.
2. Right-of-way as shown on a Replate of Alexandrian Park as recorded in Plat Book 9, page 28, Public Records of Lake County, Florida.

**Exhibit "B":**

1. Title to any part of the subject property lying below the ordinary water line of the Wekiva River is not warranted.
2. Rights of upper and lower riparian owners in and to the natural flow and use of the waters of the Wekiva River.
3. Rights of Way of Wekiva River Road 4-4298 and McDonald Road 4-4397.
4. Riparian rights incident to the land.
5. Matters shown on the boundary survey of the land prepared by Donald W. Macintosh Associates, Inc., Job Number 91091.0005, originally dated June 7, 1991, and last revised September 25, 1991, as follows:
  - a. Fences do not coincide with the property lines.
  - b. Utility lines, utility poles and guy wires.
  - c. Possible burial sites.
  - d. Road rights-of-way.
6. Non-exclusive utility easements granted to Progress Energy (formerly Florida Power Corporation) by instruments recorded in Official Record Book 353, Page 766, Official 1 Record Book 387, page 165,

Official Record Book 555, page 637, and Official Record Book 645, page 1666, Public Records of Lake County, Florida, and in Official Record Book 1862, page 303, Public Records of Orange County, Florida.

7. Existing cemetery (Ethel Cemetery) or burial lots and rights applicable thereto as recited in Corrective Warranty Deed recorded in Official Record Book 931, page 1282, Public Records of Lake County, Florida, which cemetery or burial lots (headstones) are indicated on the boundary survey prepared by Donald W. Macintosh Associated, Inc., Job Number 91091.0005, originally dated June 7, 1991, and last revised September 25, 1991, being located in the Northwest corner of the Northeast  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the Northeast  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 31, Township 19 South, Range 29 East, in Lake County, Florida.
8. Restriction limiting use of a portion of the land to streets contained in deeds recorded in the Public Records of Lake County, Florida, as follows: Deed Book 25, page 563, Deed Book 42, page 169, Deed Book 42, page 217, and Deed Book 47, page 250.
9. Terms, conditions, provisions and restrictions pertaining to development rights as imposed by Lake County Department of Planning and Development Certification of Granting of Vester Right in the Wekiva River Protection Area dated December 5, 1990 and recorded in Official Record Book 1086, page 1550, Public Records of Lake County, Florida.

11. Are there any unusual characteristics of the property (i.e., flooding problems, terrain conditions, or other features, etc.) that either reduce or enhance the value of all or part of the property?

The position of the Reserve among a regional network of conservation lands enhances its conservation and recreation values. The significance of the resources comprising the Reserve is reflected in a number of national and state designations. A portion of Rock Springs Run and all of the Wekiva River are protected as part of the Wekiva Aquatic Preserve as designated under the Florida Aquatic Preserve Act of 1975, section 258.35, Florida Statutes. Reserve waters are Outstanding Florida Waters (OFW), pursuant to Chapter 62-302 F.A.C., due to their special natural attributes. The degradation of water quality of an OFW is prohibited, other than that allowed in subsections 62-4.242(2) and (3), F.A.C. The Wekiva River, Rock Springs Run, and Seminole Creek were designated by the U.S. Department of the Interior as the Wekiva National Wild and Scenic River in October 2000. In addition, the Reserve is a component of the Florida Greenways and Trails System and contains a portion of the Wekiva River-Rock Springs Run State Canoe Trail. This 27-mile canoe trail begins at Rock Springs and follows Rock Springs Run to the Wekiva River, then north to its confluence with the St. Johns River.

The Reserve includes the state-imperiled floodplain marsh, sandhill, sandhill upland lake and scrub natural communities. Both scrub and sandhill are located along the State Road 46 frontage. Listed animal species recorded at the park include



the Florida black bear, Florida scrub-jay, striped newt and gopher tortoise. The park also contains 17 cultural sites listed in the Florida State Master Site File, including a National Register site, Twin Mounds Archaeological District, and a historic cemetery, Ethel, the oldest known cemetery in Lake County.

12. Were any Land and Water Conservation Funds (LWCF) used to purchase and/or make improvements to this property?

No. The property was purchased using EEL Bonds, CARL and P2000/Carl funding sources.

The responses to this questionnaire will be used to draft the Statement of Significance (SOS) for the entire property. The draft SOS will then be returned to the official who has final jurisdiction over the property for final revision and approval. At this point we request that the SOS be printed in letterhead and signed by the appropriate authority. The SOS letter is generally appended to the *Determination of Section 4(f) Applicability Package* and is then forwarded to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for their final determination.

*Wekiva Parkway Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study*  
**Potential Section 4(f) Resource Questionnaire**

---

Attn:

John Fillyaw  
Park Manager,  
Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park

Sir,

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority are conducting a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study for the Wekiva Parkway/SR 46 Bypass project. The project includes the following components:

- ***The Wekiva Parkway***, a 4-lane divided (expandable to 6-lane divided) limited access facility, which would begin in Orange County at US 441 just west of CR 437 and extend to the north/northeast into Lake County, turning east and crossing the Wekiva River into Seminole County and terminating at I-4.
- ***SR 46 Reconstruction and Realignment*** which would begin at the SR 46/US 441 interchange in Lake County and extend east to the vicinity of Round Lake Road, then turning southeast on a new alignment entering Orange County with an interchange connection at the Wekiva Parkway. It is expected that the SR 46 improvements would provide 4-lane divided (expandable to 6-lane divided) controlled access along the existing alignment from US 441 to the vicinity of Round Lake Road, while the remaining alignment to the southeast is expected to be limited access.
- ***CR 46A Realignment***, a 2 lane rural (expandable to 4 lane rural) roadway, which would begin on CR 46A in Lake County near the Heathrow Gatwick development area and extend to the south-southeast on a new alignment and tie into existing SR 46 with an access connection to the Wekiva Parkway. The approximate length of the CR 46A realignment is 2.72 miles.
- ***Wekiva Parkway Access Improvements*** would be required in Lake County between the realignment of CR 46A and the Wekiva River to allow access to the private property along existing SR 46. It is proposed that the Wekiva Parkway would carry all traffic crossing between Seminole and Lake Counties and provisions for access would be required for several properties in this area of Lake County.

As part of this study, we need your help in obtaining some information regarding the publicly-owned facilities within the study corridor, in this case, Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park. It would be very helpful if you could provide us with the answers to the following questions regarding the above-mentioned property.

---

1. What is the location and size of the property?

Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park is located in Lake and Seminole Counties and stretches north approximately 12 miles from State Road 46 up to the Ocala National Forest. The Preserve lies between State Road 44 and the Seminole State Forest to the west and the St. Johns River to the east. Rock Springs Run State Reserve and Wekiwa Springs State Park are located immediately south across State Road 46. The lower four miles of the Wekiva River and Black Water Creek cut through the southern portion of the Preserve.

2. What is the current and undeveloped acreage of the property?

The Preserve is approximately 17,405 acres in size. Roughly 5 acres have been developed with facilities. This does not include portions of the property that may contain improved pasture.

3. Who owns the property and who is responsible for maintenance?

On August 19, 1976, the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund (Trustees) obtained fee simple title to the property that became the Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park. The Trustees conveyed management authority of the property to the Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Recreation and Parks, under Lease No. 2950. This lease expires on April 4, 2076. Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park, Rock Springs Run State Reserve and Wekiwa Springs State Park are managed collectively as one operational unit by the Division and referred to as the Wekiva River Basin Parks. The basic policy and direction of management for these properties is contained in the approved *Wekiva Basin Parks Multi-Unit Management Plan* of April 22, 2005.

4. What type of facility is it and what is the overall function of or the available activities (i.e., ball playing, swimming, boating, etc.) on the property?

Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park is a unit of the Florida State Park system managed for the primary purpose of resource-based outdoor recreation and conservation. The Preserve is part of the Wekiva River Basin, whose waterways and associated lands in central Florida comprise some of the most prized natural assets of the state. The Preserve has regional, state and national significance for the conservation and recreational values it provides. The original purchase in 1976 of almost 5,000 acres was intended for protection of the lower Wekiva River. Additional purchases in 1994 and 1995 have formed a wildlife corridor along the Wekiva and St. Johns Rivers connecting to the Ocala National Forest. The property functions as a habitat preserve for many listed species, including Florida black bear, Florida scrub-jay, and gopher tortoise, natural buffer to a National Wild and Scenic River and Florida Aquatic Preserve, and source of high-quality resource based recreational opportunities.

The Preserve provides opportunities for horseback riding, hiking, mountain biking, primitive camping, fishing, paddling and nature observation. Visitor use is focused on the Preserve trail system that includes 23 miles of service roads and 18 miles of

dedicated trails for horseback riding, hiking and biking. A portion of the Florida National Scenic Trail is located at the southern end of the Preserve and the property is a designated stop on the East Section of the Great Florida Birding Trail. A trailhead and equestrian camping area with stalls, corrals and restroom is located at the north entrance of the park. The southern entrance provides trailhead access for hiking and a canoe/kayak launch on the Wekiva River is located at Katie's Landing.

Support facilities include an office for the Wekiva River Aquatic Preserve, a ranger residence, and volunteer RV site, all located near the southern entrance.

5. Is parking provided? If so, how many spaces are allocated?

Parking at the southern entrance accommodates approximately 12 vehicles. At the northern entrance, parking is provided in a grassed, hard packed area that can accommodate over 50 vehicles. Limited parking is provided at Katie's Landing for the launching of canoes/kayaks.

6. Are there any plans for proposed facilities? Are there any descriptions and/or maps of the facility available?

Currently, plans are underway to provide additional facilities at Katie's Landing. Plans call for a canoe/kayak concession, restrooms, parking for 50-70 vehicles and picnic facilities. The site is located about one mile north of the Wekiva River Bridge on State Road 46.

7. What type of access (pedestrian and vehicular) is provided to the facility? What is the approximate number of visitors to the property per year?

Vehicular access is available at three locations. The northern entrance to the park is located off State Road 44 in Pine Lakes and provides access to equestrian facilities. The southern entrance is located on State Road 46, east of the Wekiva River Bridge and provides access to the Sand Hill Nature Trail. Katie's Landing is located on Wekiva Park Drive, one mile north of State Road 46 and provides paddling access to the Wekiva River.

Preserve visitation for the last three years has averaged 8,500 visitors per year.

8. What is the relationship to other similarly used lands in the vicinity?

Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park is part of the Wekiva-Ocala Greenway, a continuous natural corridor spanning from Orlando to the Ocala National Forest. The Greenway is an important refuge for the Florida black bear, as well as other wildlife such as the bald eagle, swallow-tailed kite, Florida scrub-jay and wading birds. Located within the Wekiva and St. Johns River basins, the Greenway also serves an important water quality protection function. Importantly, it provides the metro-Orlando area with a large, accessible natural area to enjoy an abundance of outdoor recreation opportunities. Public conservation lands currently included in the Wekiva-Ocala Greenway are the Wekiva River Buffer Conservation Area, Wekiwa Springs State Park, Rock Springs Run State Reserve, Seminole State Forest, Black Bear Wilderness Area, Hontoon Island State Park, Blue Spring State Park, and most recently Neighborhood Lakes.



9. Are there any utility crossings?

Florida Gas Transmission Pipeline along front of property, paralleling S.R. 46.

10. Are there any known clauses that affect the ownership or jurisdiction of this property (i.e., lease, easement, covenants, restrictions, etc.)?

There are no outstanding rights, reservations, and encumbrances on Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park.

11. Are there any unusual characteristics of the property (i.e., flooding problems, terrain conditions, or other features, etc.) that either reduce or enhance the value of all or part of the property?

The position of the Preserve among a regional network of conservation lands enhances its conservation and recreation values. The significance of the resources comprising the Preserve is reflected in a number of national and state designations. The Wekiva River is protected as part of the Wekiva Aquatic Preserve as designated under the Florida Aquatic Preserve Act of 1975, section 258.35, Florida Statutes. Preserve waters are Outstanding Florida Waters (OFW), pursuant to Chapter 62-302 F.A.C., due to their special natural attributes. The degradation of water quality of an OFW is prohibited, other than that allowed in subsections 62-4.242(2) and (3), F.A.C. The Wekiva River, Rock Springs Run and Seminole Creek were designated by the U.S. Department of the Interior as the Wekiva National Wild and Scenic River in October 2000. In addition, the preserve is a component of the Florida Greenways and Trails System and provides access to the Wekiva River-Rock Springs Run State Canoe Trail. This 27-mile canoe trail begins at Rock Springs and follows Rock Springs Run to the Wekiva River, then north to its confluence with the St. Johns River.

The Preserve includes the state-imperiled floodplain marsh, scrub and sandhill natural communities. The latter is located along the State Road 46 frontage. Listed animal species recorded at the park include the Florida black bear, gopher tortoise, and Florida scrub-jay. The park also includes 10 cultural sites included in the Florida State Master Site File.

Approximately 74 percent of the Preserve is floodplain swamp located along the Wekiva and St. Johns Rivers, which renders much of the park inaccessible. Selected logging tram roads that interrupted the natural water flow are being removed to restore the natural communities and enhance the natural values of the Preserve.

12. Were any Land and Water Conservation Funds (LWCF) used to purchase and/or make improvements to this property?

No. The property was purchased using EEL Bonds and P2000/Carl funding sources.

The responses to this questionnaire will be used to draft the Statement of Significance (SOS) for the entire property. The draft SOS will be then returned to the official who has final jurisdiction over the property for final revision and approval. At this point we request that

the SOS be printed in letterhead and signed by the appropriate authority. The SOS letter is generally appended to the *Determination of Section 4(f) Applicability Package* and is then forwarded to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for their final determination.



Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services  
CHARLES H. BRONSON, Commissioner  
The Capitol • Tallahassee, FL 32399-0800  
[www.doacs.state.fl.us](http://www.doacs.state.fl.us)

**Please Respond to:**  
Division of Forestry  
3125 Conner Blvd  
Tallahassee, FL  
32399-1650

September 23, 2007

Mr. Brian Stanger  
Florida Department of Transportation – District 5  
719 South Woodland Boulevard, MS 542  
DeLand, Florida 32720

Subject: Statement of Significance Seminole State Forest  
Wekiva Parkway/SR 46 Realignment PD&E Study  
Financial Project ID.: 238275 1 22 01 and 240200 1 22 01  
Lake and Seminole Counties, Florida

Dear Mr. Stanger:

Attached are answers to the questionnaire supplied Ms. Kathleen Jorza of CH2M Hill and designed to facilitate the Determination of Applicability for Section 4(f) lands for the Wekiva Parkway PD&E Study. We believe the Seminole State Forest is very important to wildlife and public recreation and that development of the Wekiva Parkway may have significant impacts to recreation, access, wildlife and prescribed burning.

The Seminole State Forest contains 27,063 acres located north of SR 46 in Lake County, within the Wekiva River Protection Area. The forest was purchased with State Conservation and Recreation Land (CARL), Florida Forever and Save Our Rivers Funds, and is managed by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Forestry. The Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission is a cooperating agency responsible for wildlife management within the forest. The Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund of the State of Florida hold title to the majority of the forest. The St. Johns River Water Management Authority owns 2,922 acres.

The Seminole State Forest is managed under the multiple use concept (see Florida Statutes Chapter 253.034(1)(a) and Chapter 589.04(3)) and offers many benefits to Florida's citizens and visitors. Management of the forest promotes recreation, timber, wildlife, wildlife



**Florida Agriculture and Forest Products**  
\$97 Billion for Florida's Economy

Mr. Brian Sanger  
September 23, 2007  
Page 2

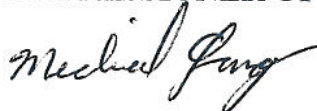
habitat, endangered species, watersheds, environmental education and many other values. Recreation opportunities include hiking, horseback riding, primitive camping, canoeing, wildlife viewing, fishing and hunting. Two hiking trails (Lower Wekiva and Sulphur Island) are included in the Florida Division of Forestry's Trailwalker Hiking Program and three horse trails are included in the Trail Trotter Program. Public parking areas and trailheads are located at the entrance on SR46 just west of the Wekiva River and on Brantley Branch Road in Cassia. In addition, five service entrances are located along SR 46 and nine service entrances are located along CR 46A.

Seminole State Forest is a component of the Wekiva-Ocala Greenway. The forest is located within the Wekiva River Protection Area as defined by Chapter 369, Part II, Florida Statutes. The Wekiva River and portions of its tributaries are designated as a National Wild and Scenic River, an Outstanding Florida Water, and an Aquatic Preserve. Management of the forest's natural resources has a significant role in the protection of the environmentally and ecologically sensitive Wekiva River Basin.

Seminole State Forest is a significant resource in meeting the conservation and recreational goals and objectives of the State of Florida due to the above mentioned natural resources and resource-based recreational opportunities. This letter as requested has been provided for documentation required for the evaluation and Determination of Section 4(f) Applicability on the Wekiva Parkway/SR 46 Realignment PD&E Study. Please let me know should you have any questions or need any additional information pertaining to our facility.

Sincerely,

**CHARLES H. BRONSON**  
**COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE**



Mike Long, Director,  
Division of Forestry

Attachment

MCL/jb/edh

Cc: Winnie Schreiber, Withlacoochee Forestry Center Manager  
Ray Lovett, Lake Forest Area Supervisor  
Kathleen Jorza, CH2M Hill



**Florida Agriculture and Forest Products**  
\$97 Billion for Florida's Economy



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1. What is the location and size of the property?

Seminole State Forest is located in Lake County, north of SR 46. The forest is bounded on the east by the Wekiva River and the Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park. Seminole Woods/Swamp is located to the west of the forest, and Rock Springs Run State Reserve and the Wekiva River Mitigation Bank (formerly known as New Garden Coal) are located south of the forest, separated by SR 46 and a small cluster of rural residential and commercial parcels.

2. What is the current and undeveloped acreage of the property?

Seminole State Forest is 10,952 hectares (27,063 acres) in size. Almost all of the property is undeveloped with the exception of a few management and recreational facilities.

3. Who owns the property and who is responsible for maintenance?

The majority of Seminole State Forest is owned by the State of Florida Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund. The St. Johns River Water Management Authority owns 2,922 acres. The forest is managed by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Forestry. The Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission is a cooperative manager and is responsible for wildlife management.

4. What type of facility is it and what is the overall function of or the available activities (i.e., ball playing, swimming, boating, etc.) on the property?

The property is designated a state forest and is managed under the multiple use concept (see Florida Statutes Chapter 253.034(1)(a) and Chapter 589.04(3)) and offers many benefits to Florida's citizens and visitors. Management of the forest promotes recreation, timber, wildlife, wildlife habitat, endangered species, watersheds, environmental education and many other values. Disturbed areas are to be restored to functioning natural communities. Recreation opportunities include hiking, horse back riding, primitive camping, canoeing, wildlife viewing, fishing and hunting. Two hiking trails (Lower Wekiva and Sulphur Island) are included in the Florida Division of Forestry's Trailwalker Hiking Program and three horse trails are included in the Trail Trotter Program.

5. Is parking provided? If so, how many spaces are allocated?

Twenty parking spaces are provided at the north entrance and twenty parking spaces are provide at the south entrance.

6. Are there any plans for proposed facilities? Are there any descriptions and/or maps of the facility available?

An upgrade to the restroom facilities is planned for the south parking area and the installation of a composting toilet is planned for the north parking area.

7. What type of access (pedestrian and vehicular) is provided to the facility? What is the approximate number of visitors to the property per year?

Two primary access points on the north and south end of the forest provide parking for dispersed recreation and access for pedestrians, motor vehicles, equestrians and bicycles. Approximately 55,000 visitors enter the forest each year.

8. What is the relationship to other similarly used lands in the vicinity?

The surrounding land uses are conservation and agricultural and include the Wekiva River Basin State Parks (Wekiwa Springs State Park, Rock Springs Run State Reserve, and Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park) and three of four parcels identified for acquisition in the Wekiva Parkway and Protection Act (Seminole Woods, Wekiva River Mitigation Bank, and Neighborhood Lakes). These lands are existing and proposed components of the Wekiva-Ocala Greenway.

9. Are there any utility crossings?

Florida Gas Transmission operates two gas lines that traverse the southern portion of the forest just north of the SR46. Embark telephone and Sumter Electric COOP provides service to management facilities and residential facilities on the forest and crosses small portions of the forest to provide service to adjacent landowners.

10. Are there any known clauses that affect the ownership or jurisdiction of this property (i.e., lease, easement, covenants, restrictions, etc.)?

The majority of the property is operated under Lease/Management Agreement No.: 3936 with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. A separate management lease agreement with St. Johns River Water Management District applies to 2,922 acres. St. Johns River Water Management District has a conservation easement. Some areas have outstanding mineral rights. The forest has no surplus acres. Various utility and ingress/egress easements are in effect for adjacent or landlocked landowners.

11. Are there any unusual characteristics of the property (i.e., flooding problems, terrain conditions, or other features, etc.) that either reduce or enhance the value of all or part of the property?

The property has significant ecological diversity which includes almost all of the naturally occurring vegetative communities found in Central Florida. The forest has over 5000 acres of scrub and has a scrub jay population of approximately 130 birds. Historically, the area in and around Seminole State Forest has had a high potential for wildfires. Prescribed fires on the state forests and other adjacent public lands can reduce the threat of wildfires but, as long as fuel levels remain high, the area will continue to be prone to large wildfires.

12. Were any Land and Water Conservation Funds (LWCF) used to purchase and/or make improvements to this property?

No. The forest was purchased with Preservation 2000, Florida Forever and Save Our River program funds.





## Florida Department of Transportation

CHARLIE CRIST  
GOVERNOR

719 South Woodland Boulevard  
DeLand, FL 32720-6834

STEPHANIE C. KOPELOUSOS  
SECRETARY

October 29, 2007

Mr. Joe Bishop, Forestry Supervisor II  
Florida Department of Agriculture and  
Consumer Services, Division of Forestry  
9610 County Road 44  
Leesburg, FL 34788

Re: Wekiva Parkway (SR 429)/SR 46 Realignment PD&E Study;  
Request for Opinion on Minimization of Impacts to Potential  
Section 4(f) Lands (Seminole State Forest)

Dear Mr. Bishop:

Thank you for the Statement of Significance letter provided by the Florida Department of Agricultural and Consumer Services, Division of Forestry (FDACS, Forestry) for inclusion in the Determination of Section 4(f) Applicability document which was prepared for the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). A copy of that document is enclosed for review by FDACS, Forestry.

We now ask that you send a letter to me at the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District Five providing the opinion of FDACS, Forestry on the findings and conclusions in the enclosed document, especially with regard to minimization of impacts to the above referenced state lands. As you know, our project consultants have met with you several times during the course of the referenced PD&E Study to discuss alternative alignment and access concepts for the proposed Wekiva Parkway. We have modified those concepts in response to requests from FDACS, Forestry and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Parks in order to further minimize impacts to potential Section 4(f) lands and to maximize wildlife habitat connectivity. We would, therefore, appreciate receiving a letter providing the opinion of FDACS, Forestry on that impact minimization effort in the PD&E Study.

We need to provide the requested FDACS, Forestry opinion letter to FHWA as soon as possible, so a response at your earliest convenience will be appreciated.

Sincerely,

Brian Stanger, P.E.  
District Environmental Management Engineer

Enclosure: Section 4(f) DOA

Copy: Bob Gleason, FDOT District Five  
Mark Callahan, P.E. CH2MHILL





## Florida Department of Transportation

CHARLIE CRIST  
GOVERNOR

719 South Woodland Boulevard  
DeLand, FL 32720-6834

STEPHANIE C. KOPELOUSOS  
SECRETARY

October 29, 2007

Mr. John Fillyaw, Park Manager  
Florida Department of Environmental Protection  
Division of Recreation and Parks  
Wekiva River Basin State Parks  
1800 Wekiwa Circle  
Apopka, FL 32712

Re: Wekiva Parkway (SR 429)/SR 46 Realignment PD&E Study;  
Request for Opinion on Minimization of Impacts to Potential Section 4(f) Lands  
(Rock Springs Run State Reserve and Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park)

Dear Mr. Fillyaw:

Thank you for the Statement of Significance letter provided by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Recreation and Parks (FDEP, Parks) for inclusion in the Determination of Section 4(f) Applicability document which was prepared for the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). A copy of that document is enclosed for review by FDEP, Parks.

We now ask that you send a letter to me at the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District Five providing the opinion of FDEP, Parks on the findings and conclusions in the enclosed document, especially with regard to minimization of impacts to the above referenced state lands. As you know, FDOT and our project consultants have met with you and other FDEP, Parks personnel several times during the course of the referenced PD&E Study to discuss alternative alignment and access concepts for the proposed Wekiva Parkway. We have modified those concepts in response to requests from FDEP, Parks in order to further minimize impacts to potential Section 4(f) lands and to maximize wildlife habitat connectivity. We would, therefore, appreciate receiving a letter providing the opinion of FDEP, Parks on that impact minimization effort in the PD&E Study.

We need to provide the requested FDEP, Parks opinion letter to FHWA as soon as possible, so a response at your earliest convenience will be appreciated.

Sincerely,

Brian Stanger, P.E.  
District Environmental Management Engineer

Enclosure: Section 4(f) DOA

Copy: Bob Gleason, FDOT District Five  
Mark Callahan, P.E. CH2MHILL

## **Wekiva Parkway PD&E Study Update - Viable Alternatives Meeting with Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection**

ATTENDEES:	Vivian Garfein, FDEP District Director Mike Snyder, OOCEA Executive Director Lisa Prather, FDEP	Aaron Watkins, FDEP Debra Laisure, FDEP David Herbster, FDEP Mark Callahan, CH2MHILL Dave Lewis, CH2MHILL
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COPIES: File - 324126

FROM: Dave Lewis

DATE: April 25, 2006

On April 20, 2006 at 1:30 p.m., the above listed attendees met in the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) District Office at 3319 Maguire Blvd. in Orlando for an update on the Wekiva Parkway PD&E Study and a discussion of viable alternatives.

Mark provided an update on the refinement of alternatives in Orange, Lake and Seminole Counties and displayed an aerial based plot of the overall alignment alternatives. He then displayed aerial based concept plots by county, including Orange County, the Wekiva Parkway/SR 46 Bypass systems interchange, west Lake County to US 441, Neighborhood Lakes alignment alternatives, CR 46A realignment, east Lake County access alternatives, and Seminole County. He also discussed traffic projections.

District Director Garfein said FDEP doesn't want remnants of SR 46 used as in the split diamond concept for east Lake County access. With regard to the Seminole County concepts, she said the alternative connecting to the SR 417/I-4 interchange "is the only way to go". Dave mentioned if widening in the SR 46 corridor in Seminole County is to the north of the existing right-of-way, that would impact approximately 6.5 acres of the Lower Wekiva River State Park.

It was discussed that there needs to be coordination with FDEP on Wekiva Parkway mitigation and permitting activities.

This summary is the writer's recollection of discussions at the meeting.

**Subject: Wekiva Parkway PD&E Study -  
Coordination with FDEP**

**Attendees:** See Attachment A

**Agenda/Handouts:** See Attachment B

**Date/Time:** March 20, 2007 1:30 pm

**Location:** CH2MHILL, Orlando Office

Mark Callahan began the meeting by asking the attendees and those on teleconference to introduce themselves. He then provided background on Wekiva Parkway and an overview of the PD&E Study to date.

Mike Snyder gave a brief update on the the acquisition of conservation lands identified in the *Wekiva Parkway and Protection Act*. He outlined the agreement pertaining to the Wekiva River Mitigation Bank property (formerly New Garden Coal). Mr. Snyder said the last parcel of Neighborhood Lakes property in Orange County had just closed and all of Neighborhood Lakes was now in state ownership. He said there had not been much interest shown in acquiring the Seminole Woods or Pine Plantation properties. Mr. Snyder indicated the Expressway Authority had acquired the Silvestri upland scrub property in northwest Orange County, the majority of which could be used for conservation minus the portion needed for Wekiva Parkway right-of-way.

Mr. Callahan mentioned that it could be a long meeting, so in the interest of time he had been asked to cover the most difficult issues first.

Lake County East Alignment and Access Alternatives

Referring to aerial based concept display boards, Mr. Callahan discussed each of the five alternative alignment/access concepts (those on teleconference were referred to the appropriate exhibit numbers on the FTP site for these alternatives and others discussed later during the meeting). He explained the alignment and interchange configuration for each of the five alternatives, and he said all of the alternatives have two long bridges for wildlife habitat connectivity. Mr. Callahan indicated design year (2032) traffic modeling showed less than 3,000 daily trips from the residential enclaves north and south of the SR 46 corridor. He said this low volume would not warrant full interchanges, and that Alternatives 1 and 4 with split diamond interchanges would require a short section of existing SR 46 to remain open for local access and a connection between the directional interchanges. Vivian Garfein asked John Fillyaw which alternative FDEP would prefer and he said Alternative 5 would be the first choice, with Alternative 2 being the second choice. Both of those concepts would have full interchanges with no portion of existing SR 46 remaining except for park access. FDEP prefers that none of existing SR 46 in this area would remain open to avoid any potential conflicts with the wildlife corridors.



Mr. Callahan indicated Alternative 1 was under consideration as the preliminary consultant recommendation based on the assessment of costs and impacts. Mr. Stanger asked what the estimated difference in construction and right-of-way costs was between Alternative 1 and Alternatives 2/5. Mr. Callahan answered that Alternative 1 was \$29M to \$33M less than Alternatives 2/5. He directed attention to the handouts attached to the agenda, which were highlighted excerpts from the *Wekiva Parkway and Protection Act*, the *Wekiva River Basin Coordinating Committee Final Report*, and the *Wekiva Basin Area Task Force Final Report*. These design criteria and adopted recommendations indicate that sections of SR 46 could remain open to provide local access to private properties, and that where at-grade portions of existing SR 46 remain in place to provide local access there will be no need to provide wildlife passages on this low-volume, low-speed service road. Mr. Callahan said the split diamond interchange concept with a short section of SR 46 remaining open for local access is in conformance with that. Mr. Fillyaw said he feels full interchanges with no portions of SR 46 open for local access is also in conformance.

Bill Howell (via teleconference) said if all of the land and residences in that area of east Lake County were acquired the interchange access concepts would not be an issue. Mr. Callahan indicated that FDOT is prohibited from buying land beyond what is needed for a specific transportation improvement and attendant drainage facilities. George Lovett concurred with that statement. Mr. Howell said the land west of the Wekiva River was important to Florida Forever and had been looked at but no FDEP funds were available. He said perhaps FDOT could acquire it. He said maybe the cost of the land would be less than the cost of the interchanges. Mr. Lovett indicated this is already a very expensive project and he doubted such an acquisition could occur, however, he asked Mr. Howell to send FDOT the land valuation information FDEP had previously developed.

There was discussion on the comparison of estimated right-of-way costs for the southern alignment (Alternatives 1 and 2) versus the northern alignment (Alternatives 4 and 5). Mr. Callahan indicated FDOT will relook at the northern alignment to verify impacts and costs.

Mr. Callahan suggested that, with regard to the Lake County East Alignment and Access Alternatives, we have further internal discussions on both sides of this issue to detail and clarify our positions, and then meet again in the near future to seek resolution. That course of action was agreed to by those present.

#### Seminole County: North or South Widening of SR 46 Corridor

Mr. Callahan, referring to aerial based concept display boards, said the current SR 46 right-of-way width east of the Wekiva River is 200 feet, and that approximately 270 feet would be needed for Wekiva Parkway and frontage roads. He said the widening could be to the north (which would impact the Lower Wekiva River State Preserve and require relocation of a 26 inch gas pipeline and it's 50 foot easement) or to the south (which would impact many existing and planned residential developments). Mr. Callahan indicated FDOT's right-of-way consultant had estimated widening to the south would cost approximately \$30M more than widening to the north. The cost of relocating the gas pipeline is estimated at \$14M to \$20M, so widening to the north would still cost approximately \$10M to \$16M less than widening to the south. He said the local elected officials and the potentially impacted residents have indicated strong opposition to widening to the south. John Fillyaw asked if the frontage roads on the north side of Wekiva Parkway along the Lower Wekiva River



State Preserve could be eliminated and have a two-way two lane road on the south side. Mr. Callahan explained how that would create some access issues, affect the slip ramps to/from Wekiva Parkway, and present operational problems. Mr. Fillyaw asked if the frontage roads in this area on the north and south sides could be reduced to one lane. Mr. Callahan said the slip ramps would have to move to the east and sufficient pavement width beyond one lane to meet Seminole County emergency vehicle access requirements would have to be provided, but CH2MHILL will look at that concept and lay it out. There will be follow up discussions on this at the next meeting.

#### Lake County: Neighborhood Lakes Alignment

Referring to aerial based concept display boards, Mr. Callahan indicated there are three alternative alignments through the Neighborhood Lakes property in Lake and Orange Counties. He said these are the west alignment (Alternative 1), the central alignment (Alternative 2), and the east alignment (Alternative 3). Mr. Callahan indicated the impacts and costs of each alternative are similar so any of them would be acceptable, but he assumed FDEP would prefer the west alignment since it would provide more land contiguous to Rock Springs Run State Reserve. The FDEP representatives indicated that was correct, they preferred Alternative 1. With the west alignment, Mr. Callahan asked FDEP to consider approval of shortening the long bridges over the expansive floodplain area to be offset by more floodplain compensation on the west side of the Wekiva Parkway alignment. Mr. Howell asked if the stormwater ponds could also be located west of the alignment and if a section of the bridge could allow underpass by park management vehicles through the floodplains and wetlands. Mr. Callahan said CH2MHILL would look at accommodating that suggestion.

#### Lake County: CR 46A Realignment

Mr. Callahan, referring to aerial based concept display boards, discussed the CR 46A Realignment alternatives. He said the west right-of-way line for Alternative 1 is on the property line of Scott Taylor's land and the Heathrow County Estates development. Other alternatives developed at the request of the Heathrow Country Estates Homeowners Association include: Alternative 1A - 50 feet east of the property line; Alternative 1B - 800 feet east of the property line; Alternative 1C - 2,700 feet east of the property line and into the Seminole State Forest; and Alternative 1D - along the existing CR 46A alignment through the Seminole State Forest. Mr. Callahan indicated he had told the Homeowners Association that Alternatives 1C and 1D are inconsistent with the *Wekiva Parkway and Protection Act* and he could not recommend either of them. Otherwise, Alternatives 1, 1A and 1B are acceptable and the landowners will be asked to decide which one is mutually agreeable. Someone on the phone from Tallahassee indicated FDEP would prefer Alternative 1 in light of acquisition discussions with landowner Scott Taylor for property to the north. The FDEP representatives and Joe Bishop indicated a letter would be prepared strongly objecting to Alternatives 1C and 1D.

#### Drainage and Permitting

Mr. Callahan indicated, consistent with the *Wekiva Parkway and Protection Act*, CH2MHILL would like to coordinate with FDEP on ideas for integrating Wekiva Parkway stormwater drainage into the adjacent lands to fit better in the surrounding environment instead of

formal stormwater ponds. An FDEP representative suggested perhaps separating treatment from attenuation or storage. It was agreed that CH2MHILL will work with FDEP on this approach and the permitting of it. Amy Stewart said some consideration must be given to pond requirements/locations necessitated by the stormwater drainage from the very long wildlife bridges.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:45 pm.

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

- **FDEP** to provide to **FDOT** the previously developed land valuation information for the east Lake County area west of the Wekiva River.
- **FDOT** to reexamine the right-of-way cost estimates for Alternatives 4 and 5 in east Lake County.
- In addition to shortening floodplain bridges and increasing floodplain compensation on the west side of Alternative 1 through Neighborhood Lakes, **FDOT** to evaluate placing all stormwater ponds on the west side of the alignment and providing vehicle access under those floodplain/wetland bridges for park management.
- In an effort to further reduce right-of-way requirements for widening to the north in Seminole County along the Lower Wekiva River State Preserve, **FDOT** to develop and evaluate additional frontage road concepts.
- After internal discussions, **FDEP and FDOT** will document their positions on the Lake County East Alignment and Access Issues prior to the next meeting.

**Meeting Summary - Wekiva Parkway 3/20/07**  
**Attachment A**





Charlie Crist  
Governor

Central District  
3319 Maguire Boulevard, Suite 232  
Orlando, Florida 32803-3767

## Department of Environmental Protection

on phone: Bill Howell, FDEP  
Greg Brock, FDEP  
Connie Bersok, FDEP  
Leo Anglerio, FDEP  
Vicki Tauxe, FDEP

Mike Sole  
Secretary

### MEETING ATTENDANCE RECORD

Joc Bishop  
Joc, a Sem. State Forest. Doc  
Doc

Purpose: Wekiva Parkway Date: 3-26-07

NAME	AFFILIATION	10 DIGIT PHONE NUMBER	E-MAIL ADDRESS &/OR FAX NUMBER
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<u>Vinny Carfagna</u>	"	<u>407-893-3339</u>	<u>Vinny.carfagna</u>
DAVID HERBST	FDEP	407 893. 3982	DAVE.HERBSTER@FLORIDA.DEP.NET
John Fillyaw	FDEP.	407-884-2006	John.Fillyaw@dep.state.fl.us
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George Lovett	FDOT	386-943-5476	<u>george.lovetta@dot.state.fl.us</u>

AMY STEWART CH2M HILL 407-423-0030  
WYNNE RICH Broad and Cassel 407-839-4245  
Vicki Stange OCEA 407-366-3311  
Dave Lewis, CH2M HILL

Printed on recycled paper

More Protection, Less Process.

**Meeting Summary - Wekiva Parkway 3/20/07**  
**Attachment B**

## AGENDA

### Wekiva Parkway Alignment and Access Issues Concerning State Lands in Lake and Seminole Counties

CH2MHILL Orlando Office, Main Conference Room

March 20, 2007

1:30 pm

- Background on the Wekiva Parkway
- Update on Acquisition of Conservation Lands Identified in the *Wekiva Parkway and Protection Act*
- Overview of the Preliminary Consultant Recommendation within the Overall Study Area
- Areas of Focus at this Meeting:
  - Lake County
    - Neighborhood Lakes Alignment
    - CR 46A Realignment
    - Lake County East Alignment and Access Alternatives
  - Seminole County
    - North or South Widening of SR 46 Corridor
- Next Steps



Range 27 East; thence Westerly along the south line of said Section 8 to the southeast corner of Section 7, Township 23 South, Range 27 East; thence Westerly along the south line of said Section 7 to the southwest corner thereof, said corner lying on the line of demarcation between Orange County and Lake County; thence generally Northerly and along said county line to the northeast corner of Section 12, Township 20 South, Range 26 East, said corner lying on the east line of Range 26 East; thence generally Northerly and along said east line of Range 26 East to the southeast corner of Section 24, Township 19 South, Range 26 East; thence Westerly along the south line of said Section 24 to the southeast corner of Section 23, Township 19 South, Range 26 East; thence Westerly along the south line of said Section 23 to the southwest corner thereof; thence Northerly along the west line of said Section 23 to the southwest corner of Section 14, Township 19 South, Range 26 East; thence Northerly along the west line of said Section 14 to the southwest corner of Section 11, Township 19 South, Range 26 East; thence generally Northeasterly to the southwest corner of Section 1, Township 19 South, Range 26 East; thence generally Northeasterly to the southwest corner of Section 31, Township 18 South, Range 27 East; thence generally Northeasterly to the southwest corner of Section 29, Township 18 South, Range 27 East; thence generally Northeasterly to the northwest corner of Section 28, Township 18 South, Range 27 East; thence Easterly along the north line of said Section 28 to the northwest corner of Section 27, Township 18 South, Range 27 East; thence Easterly along the north line of said Section 27 to the northwest corner of Section 26, Township 18 South, Range 27 East; thence Easterly along the north line of said Section 26 to the northwest corner of Section 25, Township 18 South, Range 27 East; thence Easterly along the north line of said Section 25 to an intersection with the west line of Range 28 East; thence Northerly along the west line of said Range 28 East, to the northwest corner of Section 6, Township 18 South, Range 28 East, and the Point of Beginning.

**History.**--s. 1, ch. 2004-384.

### **369.317 Wekiva Parkway.--**

(1) The "Wekiva Parkway" means any limited access highway or expressway constructed between State Road 429 and Interstate 4 specifically incorporating the corridor alignment recommended by Recommendation 2 of the Wekiva River Basin Area Task Force final report dated January 15, 2003, and the recommendations of the SR 429 Working Group that were adopted January 16, 2004.

(2) The Wekiva Parkway and related transportation facilities shall follow the design criteria contained in the recommendations of the Wekiva River Basin Area Task Force adopted by reference by the Wekiva River Basin Coordinating Committee in its final report of March 16, 2004, and the recommendations of the Wekiva Coordinating Committee contained in its final report of March 16, 2004, subject to reasonable environmental, economic, and engineering considerations.

(3) With the exception of the road commonly referred to as the Apopka Bypass, the construction of any other limited-access highway or expressway that is identified by the Final Recommendations of the State Road 429 Working Group adopted January 16,



2004, within the Wekiva Study Area shall adhere to transportation and conservation principles identified within the Final Report of the Wekiva River Basin Coordinating Committee dated March 16, 2004. If any other limited-access highway or expressway is considered within the Wekiva Study Area, then such a project shall adhere to the extent practicable with transportation and conservation principles identified within the Final Report of the Wekiva River Basin Coordinating Committee dated March 16, 2004.

(4) Access to properties adjacent to SR 46 shall be maintained through appropriate neighborhood streets or frontage roads integrated into the parkway design.

(5) In Seminole County, the Seminole County Expressway Authority, the Department of Transportation, and the Florida Turnpike Enterprise shall locate the precise corridor and interchanges for the Wekiva Parkway consistent with the legislative intent expressed in this act and other provisions of this act.

(6) The Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority is hereby granted the authority to act as a third-party acquisition agent, pursuant to s. 259.041 on behalf of the Board of Trustees or chapter 373 on behalf of the governing board of the St. Johns River Water Management District, for the acquisition of all necessary lands, property and all interests in property identified herein, including fee simple or less-than-fee simple interests. The lands subject to this authority are identified in paragraph 10.a., State of Florida, Office of the Governor, Executive Order 03-112 of July 1, 2003, and in Recommendation 16 of the Wekiva Basin Area Task Force created by Executive Order 2002-259, such lands otherwise known as Neighborhood Lakes, a 1,587+/- acre parcel located in Orange and Lake Counties within Sections 27, 28, 33, and 34 of Township 19 South, Range 28 East, and Sections 3, 4, 5, and 9 of Township 20 South, Range 28 East; Seminole Woods/Swamp, a 5,353+/- acre parcel located in Lake County within Section 37, Township 19 South, Range 28 East; New Garden Coal; a 1,605+/- acre parcel in Lake County within Sections 23, 25, 26, 35, and 36, Township 19 South, Range 28 East; Pine Plantation, a 617+/- acre tract consisting of eight individual parcels within the Apopka City limits. The Department of Transportation, the Department of Environmental Protection, the St. Johns River Water Management District, and other land acquisition entities shall participate and cooperate in providing information and support to the third-party acquisition agent. The land acquisition process authorized by this paragraph shall begin no later than December 31, 2004. Acquisition of the properties identified as Neighborhood Lakes, Pine Plantation, and New Garden Coal, or approval as a mitigation bank shall be concluded no later than December 31, 2010. Department of Transportation and Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority funds expended to purchase an interest in those lands identified in this subsection shall be eligible as environmental mitigation for road construction related impacts in the Wekiva Study Area.

(a) Acquisition of the land described in this section is required to provide right of way for the Wekiva Parkway, a limited access roadway linking State Road 429 to Interstate 4, an essential component in meeting regional transportation needs to provide regional connectivity, improve safety, accommodate projected population and economic growth,





# WEKIVA RIVER BASIN COORDINATING COMMITTEE FINAL REPORT

*Recommendations for Enhanced  
Land Use Planning Strategies  
and Development Standards to  
Protect Water Resources of the  
Wekiva River Basin*



MARCH 16, 2004



Maitland Boulevard west to link to SR 429 and US 441— and a partial realignment of SR 46 to be known as the SR 46 Bypass around the communities of Mt. Plymouth and Sorrento. The SR 46 Bypass will be integrated with the Wekiva Parkway. The SR 429 Working Group's final recommendations, adopted January 16, 2004, and map are included in *Appendix C*.

## Wekiva Parkway Location and Design

**Recommendation 1:** The Committee supports development of the Wekiva Parkway and endorses the following recommendations of the Wekiva Basin Area Task Force, *Appendix D*:

- **Task Force Recommendation 2:** Recommended Corridor for the Wekiva Parkway, *Figure 3*, incorporating the corridor alignment recommended by the SR 429 Working Group, *Figure 4*;
- **Task Force Recommendations 3 and 4:** Guiding Principles for the Wekiva Parkway Design Features and Construction;
- **Task Force Recommendation 7:** Interchanges Along the Wekiva Parkway;
- **Task Force Recommendation 9:** Local Government Review of Long-Range Transportation Plans; and,
- **Task Force Recommendation 10:** Application of Guiding Principles to State Road 44.

**Implementation Strategy:** Consistent with Recommendation 4 below, the Committee recommends initiation of legislative action and amendment of the Metropolitan Planning Organization's Long-Range Plans to initiate feasibility studies, planning and project development for the Wekiva Parkway. The federal process will need to be followed to maintain the Wekiva Parkway's eligibility for federal funding. Local government comprehensive plans should be amended to include the Wekiva Parkway.

## Interchange Land Use Plans

**Recommendation 2:** Consistent with Recommendation 13 of the Wekiva Basin Area Task Force, *Appendix D*, the Committee recommends local governments hosting an interchange on the Wekiva Parkway adopt into their comprehensive plans interchange land use plans (excluding the interchange with Interstate 4) to address the following: appropriate land uses and compatible development; secondary road access; access management; right-of-way protection; vegetation protection and water conserving landscaping; and the height and appearance of structures and signage. The major objectives of the interchange land use plans are to allow for development which is appropriate in scale and intensity given the land uses in the area, to assure development is compatible with the surrounding area, and to assure protection of surface water and groundwater resources and important wildlife habitat.

**Implementation Strategy:** The Committee recommends implementation of legislation to direct planning for interchanges by local governments.

## Land Acquisition

In addition to the recommendations made above, the Committee endorsed the Department of Transportation's strategy for legislative action to expedite land acquisition to purchase conservation land surrounding or adjacent to Wekiva Parkway. The Department of Transportation presented its recommendations and the *Wekiva Parkway Land Acquisition and Feasibility Study* to Governor Bush in a final report dated January 14, 2004. Executive Order 03-112 directed the Department of Transportation to:

10. The Department of Transportation, using existing authority under Florida Statutes, Chapters 334, 335, and 338, including, but not limited to, sections 334.03, 334.044, 335.02, 335.18, 338.001 and related rules, shall:



## APPENDIX D

# WEKIVA BASIN AREA TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS (EXCERPTS)

**Recommendation 2:** The Task Force recommends that the appropriate transportation agency(ies) use the corridor that is depicted on Figure 3, “Recommended Corridor for the Wekiva Parkway” to undertake the environmental and engineering studies to determine the precise alignment. In addition to the studies, the appropriate transportation agency(ies) shall also apply the “Guiding Principles for Corridor Location” listed herein in selecting the final roadway alignment. The final alignment within Seminole County shall be subject to the approval of the Seminole County Expressway Authority. The Wekiva Parkway must be planned in its entirety, rather than in phases.

**Recommendation 3:** The Task Force recommends that the appropriate transportation agency(ies) use the following “Guiding Principles for the Wekiva Parkway Design Features and Construction.” The guiding principles should also be applied to the construction of new expressways and the expansion of existing expressways, as applicable. When the design of any new expressway facility is completed it should:

- a. Provide that all new expressways be fully limited access, with interchanges;
- b. Promote a “Parkway” look with appropriate natural buffers between the roadways and the adjacent areas;
- c. Include the maximum provision for bridging through strategically important wetlands;
- d. Elevate (bridge) identified functionally significant wildlife corridors, and provide appropriate wildlife bridges with barriers to direct wildlife to safe crossing points;

e. Design storm water treatment facilities to minimize habitat loss and promote restoration of impacted sites and assure capture and treatment of runoff from bridges over Outstanding Florida Waters to Outstanding Florida Waters standards;

f. Offer opportunities to view, understand, and access the environmental uniqueness of the Wekiva River ecosystem;

g. Provide non-intrusive and minimal roadway and bridge lighting in the Wekiva River Protection Area to support the conservation of dark skies in the basin; and

h. Incorporate safety and access design features to promote the continuation of prescribed burning in the basin.

**Recommendation 4:** The Task Force further recommends that when the design and construction of the Wekiva Parkway is completed it should:

a. Reduce hazards to wildlife by relocating CR 46-A to tie into SR 46 at the proposed SR 46 interchange;

b. Close the portions of CR 46-A that parallel and duplicate SR 46 (east of the recommended relocation) and serve only the traffic necessary to provide access to local property;

c. Elevate the Wekiva Parkway through the Wekiva River Protection Area to the maximum extent feasible, and have bridges and adequate barriers as often as practical to provide for adequate wildlife passages;

d. Bridge Wekiva River wetlands and floodplains on publicly owned lands that are adjacent to the Wekiva Parkway where known wildlife crossings exist;



e. Close existing SR 46 at an appropriate location west of the Lake-Seminole County line so that the remaining sections of SR 46 continue to be open only to provide local access to private properties and recreational and conservation lands, and prevent through traffic; and

f. Where the at-grade portions of the existing SR 46 remain in place to provide local access, there will be no need to provide wildlife passages on this low-volume, low-speed service road.

**Recommendation 5:** The Task Force recommends that the Florida Department of Transportation, the Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority, and the Seminole County Expressway Authority consider the recommendations of the Task Force and prepare a report to the Governor and Legislature of their joint recommendations for the appropriate transportation entity(ies) to operate the Wekiva Parkway. The report shall also include joint recommendations on the following:

- a. A funding plan that addresses the Task Force recommendations, including those related to wider rights of way to promote the parkway concept, preserve rural character, buffer interchanges, and other design features; and
- b. Any legislation needed to secure the authority needed to acquire private lands or development rights within the Wekiva River Protection Area and the proposed Wekiva River Springshed Protection Area in excess of that which is required for right-of-way and associated roadway construction.

**Recommendation 6:** The Task Force recommends that the plan for mitigating impacts of the construction of the Wekiva Parkway shall assure that to the maximum extent feasible, land acquisition and mitigation occur prior to roadway construction, and mitigation must occur only within the Wekiva River Protection Area, Wekiva River Basin, or Wekiva River Springshed.

**Recommendation 7:** The Task Force recommends that the number of interchanges located along the Wekiva Parkway not exceed five, and be located as follows:

- a. SR 429, south of US 441. The most southerly interchange would occur south of US 441 and serve as a junction with the current SR 429 to allow a continuation of the route to the northwest and then north and also to serve as a future connection to the proposed extension to Maitland Boulevard (the Apopka Bypass).

b. US 441 - An interchange would be located where SR 429 reaches US 441.

c. Between US 441 and SR 46 – A single interchange, at an appropriate location, between US 441 and SR 46 and a potential system connection to the proposed US 441 bypass to be determined by the appropriate transportation agencies, in cooperation with local governments, consistent with the guiding principles for corridor location, as applicable. The ultimate location of the interchange will be reflected in the transportation component of the sector plan developed pursuant to Recommendation 11.

d. SR 46 – An interchange would be located at SR 46 near the area where CR 46-A should be relocated.

e. Interstate 4 – An interchange would be located where the Wekiva Parkway reaches I-4 in Seminole County no farther north than the St. John's River Bridge and no farther south than the SR 417 interchange on I-4.

**Recommendation 8:** The Task Force recommends creation of a working group of stakeholders of applicable local governments, transportation agencies, environmental groups, citizen representatives, and state and regional agencies to study the corridor for a new, limited access facility — the US 441 Bypass — to link the Wekiva Parkway south of SR 46 and west of the Wekiva River Protection Area, to US 441 to Lake and northwest Orange Counties. As recommended above, the "Guiding Principles for Corridor Location and the Guiding Principles for the Wekiva Parkway Design and Construction," as applicable, shall also be applied to the corridor selection, design, and construction of the US 441 Bypass. The US 441 Bypass shall be planned in its entirety, rather than in phases. This working group shall also consider, evaluate, and make recommendations concerning the potential capacity expansion of the other roadways listed in Table 1, as identified in Recommendation 9 in light of the creation of a US 441 Bypass and the Wekiva Parkway.

**Recommendation 9:** The Task Force recommends that all affected local governments review their long-range transportation improvement plans in light of the Task Force's recommendations. Transportation agencies and local governments in the Wekiva Basin area have plans to increase the number of travel lanes on certain roadways located within the Wekiva River Protection Area and within the recharge area for the Wekiva River springshed. The Task Force anticipates that the Wekiva Parkway and the US 441 Bypass should replace the need to widen many of the existing



## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Recommendation 4:** The Task Force further recommends that when the design and construction of the Wekiva Parkway is completed it should:

- a. Reduce hazards to wildlife by relocating CR 46-A to tie into SR 46 at the proposed SR 46 interchange;
- b. Close the portions of CR 46-A that parallel and duplicate SR 46 (east of the recommended relocation) and serve only the traffic necessary to provide access to local property;

- c. Elevate the Wekiva Parkway through the Wekiva River Protection Area to the maximum extent feasible, and have bridges and adequate barriers as often as practical to provide for adequate wildlife passages;

- d. Bridge Wekiva River wetlands and floodplains on publicly owned lands that are adjacent to the Wekiva Parkway where known wildlife crossings exist;

- e. Close existing SR 46 at an appropriate location west of the Lake-Seminole County line so that the remaining sections of SR 46 continue to be open only to provide local access to private properties and recreational and conservation lands, and prevent through traffic; and
- f. Where the at-grade portions of the existing SR 46 remain in place to provide local access, there will be no need to provide wildlife passages on this low-volume, low-speed service road.

In addition to the recommendations made above, and in keeping with the concept of creating a scenic roadway through the Wekiva Basin Area, the Task Force expressed its desire to maximize the natural attributes of the area, including maintaining the native forested landscape to minimize mowed landscapes and preclude the need to plant potentially invasive exotic species for groundcover. Further, because the Wekiva Basin Area hosts several recreational trails and the Wekiva National Wild

and Scenic River, the Task Force recognized the potential to co-locate other linear facilities within the corridor. The special nature of federal and state conservation and recreational designations require that the planning and construction of the Wekiva Parkway abide by parameters outlined in regulations and legislation making those designations.

**Recommendation 5:** The Task Force recommends that the Florida Department of Transportation, the Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority, and the Seminole County Expressway Authority consider the recommendations of the Task Force and prepare a report to the Governor and Legislature of their joint recommendations for the appropriate transportation entity(ies) to operate the Wekiva Parkway. The report shall also include joint recommendations on the following:

- a. A funding plan that addresses the Task Force recommendations, including those related to wider rights of way to promote the parkway

## **Wekiva Parkway Alignment and Access Issues Concerning State Lands in Lake and Seminole Counties**

ATTENDEES: See Attached Sign In Sheet

FROM: Mark Callahan, P.E.

DATE: July 31, 2007

A meeting was conducted on July 17, 2007 at Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) offices in Tallahassee, FL. The purpose of the meeting was for the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority (OOCEA) to provide a briefing to Senior FDEP staff and to specifically discuss outstanding key issues that have been identified during the course of the Wekiva Parkway Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study.

The agenda for the meeting and the sign in sheet are attached to this meeting summary.

The meeting started with introductions of attendees. Mark Callahan of CH2M HILL, the consultant project manager for the PD&E Study, provided a history and overview of the Wekiva Parkway including the original studies in the late-1980s and the deliberations of the Wekiva Basin Area Task Force and Coordinating Committee. These efforts prompted the passage of the Wekiva Parkway and Protection Act in 2004.

A review of the purpose and need of the project followed with emphasis on the growing congestion in the SR 46 corridor and the high number of crashes resulting in a significant number of fatalities. In addition, given the unique area the corridor traverses there are a notable number of wildlife/vehicle collisions resulting in animal mortality including the Florida Black Bear and other species.

A brief discussion of current land use and land use control measures outlined in the Wekiva Parkway and Protection Act was undertaken.

Wayne Rich of Broad and Cassel, representing the Orlando-Orange County Expressway, briefed the group on the land acquisition status. The Wekiva River Mitigation Bank property is the subject of an agreement between FDEP, OOCEA and FDOT for a conservation agreement for the property. The Neighborhood Lakes Property has been acquired through a funding agreement including FDEP, FDOT, St. Johns River Water Management District, OOCEA, Orange County, and Lake County. The Seminole Woods/Swamp parcels are owned by a family which has indicated/shown no interest in selling the property or providing for a conservation easement. The Pine Plantation parcels may be partially impacted by the Wekiva Parkway alignment but no other land acquisition funds are available for purchase of this property.

At this point a review of the initial consultant recommendations along with briefing on additional input was reviewed for several key areas. The following provides a summary of the discussion.

### **Alignment of Wekiva Parkway through the Neighborhood Lakes Property (Orange and Lake Counties)**

Three alignments were assessed (Alternative 1 (west), Alternative 2 (center), and Alternative 3 (east)). Assessments of the three alignments indicated similar impacts with Alternative 3 impacting

a small neck of the Rock Springs Run. Alternative 1 is the closest option to the Mt. Plymouth neighborhood and there would be some moderate noise impacts. The Consultant Recommendation was for Alternative 1 given the similar impacts for the alignments and based on FDEP indicating their preference for Alternative 1 (west) since it provided the greatest contiguous holding with Rock Springs Run State Reserve. FDOT has requested that as the project moves forward more detailed floodplain boundaries will be defined and it is requested that FDEP work with FDOT on floodplain compensation in an effort to maximize cost efficiencies.

### **CR 46A Realignment (Lake County)**

A single viable alternative (Alternative 1) for the CR 46A realignment was presented to the public in 2006. Concerns regarding the alignment were raised by residents of Heathrow Country Estates, a neighborhood to the west adjacent to the proposed alignment. Based on the input from the residents four additional alternatives were examined (Alternatives 1A, 1B, 1C, and 1D). Based on assessments of these additional alternatives it was noted that Alt. 1D does not appear to be consistent with the Wekiva Parkway and Protection Act. Alt. 1C impacts the western portions of the Seminole State Forest and it also impacts a karst area with a large floodplain. Alt. 1B is approximately 800 feet east of the original alignment and it bisects the private property it traverses. Alt. 1A is 50 feet east of the original alignment. Alternative 1A was the Consultant Recommendation for this area.

Additional feedback was provided by the residents of Country Estates who suggest the alignment should be located in the Seminole Forest or 800 feet east of the original alignment. The Lake County Commission has requested the study team to look at an alignment located 100 feet east of the original alignment allowing for some existing vegetation and buffering to remain. Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Affairs have stated their concern about impacts to the Seminole State Forest. At this point FDOT is evaluating the Lake County request and is comfortable with that alignment or Alt 1A.

FDEP indicated their preference as the westernmost options (Alternative 1, 1A or new option as per Lake County).

### **Lake County East Access Alternatives**

A key issue for the portion of the Wekiva Parkway east of Neighborhood Lakes is how to provide access to private and State-owned lands while providing the desired habitat connectivity in this important area. Two basic schemes were developed: First a "split diamond interchange" concept and a "two full interchanges" concept. The split diamond provides a balance solution based on the projected traffic for this area representing less costs and right-of-way. The split diamond concept did require local traffic to use existing portions of SR 46 roughly between CR 46A and Wekiva River Road. The two full interchanges concept provided a high level of capacity not consistent with the land uses but did allow for closure of SR 46 between the two interchanges. The split diamond interchange was the consultant recommendation for access in this area. The Wekiva Commission (June 1, 2007 meeting) requested FDOT to consider the two full interchange concept given concerns about the existing portions of SR 46 remaining open with the split diamond alternative. In addition, the Lake County Commission (June 5, 2007 meeting) indicated a similar preference for the two full interchange concept.

Discussion with FDEP mirrored concerns raised by the Wekiva Commission and the Lake County Commission. Essentially the continued use of portions of SR 46 will incrementally diminish with wildlife and habitat. FDEP emphasized that having the two interchanges concept and eliminating travel on the referenced segment of SR 46 was critical to their support of the Wekiva Parkway.

## **Lake County East Alignment Alternatives**

In the same area of the project where the access issue is located there are three alternative alignments under consideration. The alignment alternatives in the "hump" area of SR 46 include the Red, Blue and Green Alternatives. The Red and Blue Options are very similar with locations approximately 1,400 feet south of the hump on SR 46. The Blue Alt. has slightly higher impacts than the Red. The Green alignment is located just south, and in some areas within, the existing SR 46 right-of-way. The basic impact trade-offs are the higher wetland, floodplain, and public land impacts for the Red and Blue Alts. and greater impacts to residents and higher costs for the Green alignment. The Consultant recommendation suggested elimination of the Blue Alternative and recommended the Red Alternative due to its lower cost and impacts to residents in the area. Furthermore the Green Alternative left property to the south with no access.

FDEP indicated a preference for the Green Alignment because it provided more contiguous habitat in the area and had less impacts to public lands.

## **Environmental Bridges (Lake County)**

The Guiding Principles established for the Wekiva Parkway included provisions for significant bridge structures to enhance habitat connectivity and to reduce wildlife collisions. The existing corridor has a bridge at the Wekiva River and two wildlife underpasses to the west. The total existing length of bridged area is approximately 600 feet. Original concepts for the bridges provided more extensive bridging in the same areas where there are structures today with the total bridged area at approximately 14,000 feet. FDOT remains concerned with the costs of this project recognizing it is an important transportation improvement which will also provide a significant environmental benefit when implemented. A value engineering study was performed for the project which brought forth several issues regarding bridge areas in the early concepts. These issues suggested pulling bridge limits off of interchange ramp and auxiliary lane areas and to reduce bridging in curve locations. By minimizing the amount of bridge structure it was recognized that the project would be more affordable and could possibly be implemented earlier. With this input adjustments have been undertaken with the bridge limits which brings the three bridge areas to a total of approximately 9,000 feet. Wildlife fencing will be installed to direct wildlife to the bridge locations.

FDEP acknowledged that the proposed change although less than the early concept remains a significant enhancement to connectivity. A question was raised regarding funding of the project and it was indicated that FDOT does not reasonably foresee funds available for the project. That said FDOT will be exploring all options for funding which may include tolling on additional portions of the project and/or public/private partnerships.

## **Wekiva River Mitigation Bank (Lake County)**

A discussion on the Wekiva River Mitigation Bank ensued wherein Mr. Rich provided some background on the agreement regarding the conservation easements. Part of the agreement includes language regarding the impact of the Wekiva Parkway to the number of mitigation credits approved for the entire property. Through this discussion FDEP indicated that the Green Alternative would have less impacts to the mitigation credits as compared to the Red Alternative.

## **North or South Widening of SR 46 (Seminole County)**

East of the Wekiva River two alternatives were examined along the SR 46 corridor. The proposed improvement in Seminole County involve putting the Wekiva Parkway in the center of the right-of-way between two one-way frontage roads. This concept requires approximately 270 feet of right-of-way. The existing right-of-way is 200 feet. The South Alternative involves acquiring right-of-way (approx. 70 feet) to the south which impacts a significant number of residential parcels. The North Alternative

involves acquiring right-of-way to the north which impacts Lower Wekiva State Preserve and also impacts a major gas line within a 50 foot easement north of existing SR 46. Evaluations indicated that the North Alignment requires additional costs for the gas line relocation and easement. However, these costs are offset by the higher land values for the South Alternative. The Consultant identified the North Alternative as the Recommendation. The Seminole County Expressway Authority has indicated their preference for the North Alternative due to the potential impacts to the south. FDOT has committed to examine options to minimize impacts to the Lower Wekiva State Preserve as a part of the study as well as during design. Furthermore FDOT will work with FDEP Land Managers to identify other measures to minimize impacts to the preserve.

FDEP indicated their preference for the South Alternative due to the impacts to Lower Wekiva State Preserve. FDEP did also acknowledge the difficulty of acceptance of the South Alternative to residents and County leaders.

At this point in the meeting Bob Ballard of FDEP reviewed the agency's concerns as summarized above. He specifically emphasized the importance of the Two Interchanges in East Lake County and indicated a willingness to work with FDOT on the other issues.

FDOT committed to re-examine the access and alignment alternatives in East Lake County. Also FDOT emphasized their commitment to work with FDEP to minimize the impacts to Lower Wekiva State Preserve.

Attachments: Meeting Agenda  
Sign In Sheet



Wekiva Parkway Meeting  
at FDEP Tallahassee  
July 17, 2007 - 2:30 p.m.  
SIGN-IN SHEET

Name	Representing	Email Address	Phone No.	Fax No.
Mark Callahan	CH2M Hill OCEA	mark.callahan@ch2m.com	407-423-0030	
Brian Stanger	FDOT	brian.stanger@dot.fl.us	386-943-5391	
VIVIAN GARFINKL	DEP. Central District	vivian.garfinkel@dep.state.fl.us	407-893-3338	
Fred Koose	FDOT	fredrick.oose@dot.state.fl.us	386-943-5412	
Richard Fowler	FDOT D-5	richard.fowler@dot.state.fl.us	386-943-5392	
Stephen Tonjes	" "	stephen.tonjes@dot.state.fl.us	5394	
Vicki Sharpe	FDOT/CEMO	vicki.sharpe@dot.state.fl.us	(850) 414-5326	
Suzanne Ray	FDEP/OIP	suzanne.e.ray@dep.state.fl.us	245-2172	
Bill Walsch	FDOT	william.walsch@dot.state.fl.us	386-943-5411	
ALBERT GREGORY	DEP/NEP	Albert.Gregory@dep.state.fl.us	850-245-3051	
Parks Small	DEP/DRP	Parks.Small@dep.state.fl.us	850/245-3104	
FRANK HICKSON	FDOT	Frank.Hickson@dot.state.fl.us	407.482.7852	
WAYNE RICH	Broad and Cassel	wayne.rich@broadandcassel.com	407-839-4245	
Mike Szpore	OCEA	ANDREW.MOORE@dep.state.fl.us	401-325-3211	
John Fillyaw	DEP/WEKIVA	John.Fillyaw@dep.state.fl.us	407/881-2206	
Bob Ballard	DEP		850/445-2043	
DEBORAH POPP	DEP/OSL	Deborah.Popp@dep.state.fl.us	850/245-2555	
Jim Stostamer	DEP/URW	jim.stostamer@dep.state.fl.us	850/245-2490	



# Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Marjory Stoneman Douglas Building  
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000

Charlie Crist  
Governor

Jeff Kottkamp  
Lt. Governor

Michael W. Sole  
Secretary

March 20, 2008

Brian Stanger, Environmental Engineer  
Fifth District Office  
Department of Transportation  
719 South Woodland Boulevard  
Deland, Florida 32720

Dear Mr. Stanger:

We have reviewed the materials you provided to John Fillyaw regarding the Wekiva Parkway/State Road 46 realignment project.

We appreciate your efforts to reduce the adverse effects of the project on Rock Springs Run State Reserve and Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park. Based on the supplemental information we received from Mr. Mark Callahan, it appears that the draft preliminary engineering drawings incorporate the main revisions that have been discussed in the past. Our understanding is that the project's final design will include (1) bridging across the Wekiva River spanning approximately 2,150 feet, (2) an eastern wildlife bridge spanning approximately 4,000 feet, (3) a western wildlife bridge spanning approximately 1,957 feet, and (4) a bridge on the Neighborhood Lakes property spanning approximately 800 feet. In our opinion, these bridge lengths represent the bare minimum needed to ensure adequate connectivity between the major tracts of public land. They should not be reduced further in subsequent design stages.

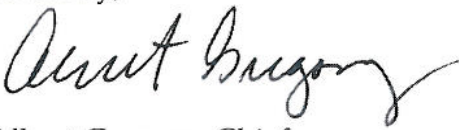
Just as a factual comment, the Neighborhood Lakes property that was acquired in March 2007 has not yet been added to Rock Springs Run State Reserve, as is stated in the Section 4(f) report. Discussions are still ongoing with Lake County, Orange County, the St. Johns River Water Management District, and the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund regarding a management lease for the property. We expect the lease to be completed soon.

Mr. Brian Stanger  
Page Two  
March 20, 2008

This letter does not serve as authorization from the Division of Recreation and Parks to begin construction on the project. Prior to any construction activities, an easement from the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund will be required. The easement will address project details such as access to park lands, coordination with park staff, and location of staging areas, among other matters.

I hope this information will be helpful. Please contact me at (850) 245-3051, or [Albert.Gregory@dep.state.fl.us](mailto:Albert.Gregory@dep.state.fl.us) if you would like to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

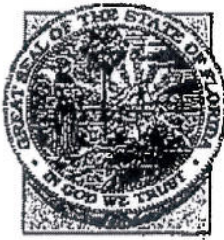
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Albert Gregory", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Albert Gregory, Chief  
Office of Park Planning  
Division of Recreation and Parks

AG/agf

cc: Vivian Garfein, Director, Central District Office  
Mike Bullock, Director, Florida Park Service  
Scott Robinson, Assistant Director, Florida Park Service  
Larry Fooks, Chief, Bureau of Parks District 3  
Parks Small, Chief, Bureau of Natural and Cultural Resources  
Warren Poplin, Manager, Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park





Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services  
CHARLES H. BRONSON, Commissioner  
The Capitol • Tallahassee, FL 32399-0800

Please Respond to:  
Division of Forestry  
Forest Management Bureau  
3125 Conner Blvd. / C25  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1658

May 30, 2008

Brian Stanger, Environmental Engineer  
Fifth District Office  
Department of Transportation  
719 South Woodland Boulevard  
Deland, Florida 32720

Dear Mr. Stanger:

The Division of Forestry (DOF) has reviewed the information provided in the Determination of Section 4(f) Applicability for the Wekiva Parkway (SR 429)/SR 46 Realignment PD&E Study, October 2007. We appreciate your efforts to reduce the adverse effects of the project on the Seminole State Forest (SSF), and on your willingness to work with our staff and address our issues during this process. We appreciate your consideration and selection of an alternative that provides two full interchanges between CR46A and the Wekiva River, closes the existing section of SR46 between these points, and re-aligns CR46A to the west of the SSF.

Our understanding is that the preferred alternative includes a bridge across the Wekiva River spanning approximately 2,150 feet, an eastern wildlife bridge spanning approximately 4,000 feet, a western wildlife bridge spanning approximately 1,957 feet, and a bridge on the Neighborhood Lakes property spanning approximately 800 feet. We believe these lengths represent the minimum needed to ensure adequate connectivity and do not support any further reductions in the bridged spans.

The DOF does not support the location of the retention pond on the north side of the Parkway immediately to the west of the Wekiva River. Instead, it would be favorable for the property to become part of the SSF and to be used to offset other areas directly impacted by the Parkway. Two small parcels of SSF that lie between CR46A and SR46 should be considered for retention ponds to reduce impacts elsewhere. These small parcels cannot be effectively managed as State Forest land now, or with the current Parkway design. The Cabanas property to the north of CR46A will be partially affected by the Parkway. The unaffected portion of the property should be considered as replacement acreage for areas impacted on Seminole State Forest.



Florida Agriculture and Forest Products  
\$97 Billion for Florida's Economy



Mr. Brian Stanger  
May 30, 2008  
Page Two

On page 18, item number 7, "Access and Approximate Number of Visitors Per Year" the number of visitors to SSF should be changed from 55,000 to 32,000 per year.

Although the Determination document and the coordination thus far are an important effort toward minimizing and mitigating the impacts of the project to the land base and to wildlife, we continue to believe the most significant impact will be to fire management of the public land in the vicinity of this project. We believe this impact will be more important than the small percentage of public land that is directly impacted, and is arguably more important than the potential impacts to wildlife. Without active and effective fire management on the tens of thousands of acres of public land that occur in the Wekiva Basin Ecosystem, these lands will lose significant wildlife and recreational value. On the SSF alone, our long-term goal is to prescribe burn between 3200 and 8900 acres per year. Without an effective prescribed fire program on these lands to reduce fuels and maintain appropriate wildlife habitat, the potential for catastrophic wildfire increases with a resulting increase in the potential for serious accidents and road closures. We believe that permanent lighted signs that can be used to caution drivers and to reduce speed limits during smoke events, and remote weather stations that can be accessed by the agencies to obtain immediate and highly localized weather information are some of the solutions that must be implemented. While we agree that many important steps have been taken to minimize and mitigate the effects of this project, we are very concerned that the impact to fire management, which is the most important and long-lasting impact on wildlife, recreation and driver safety have been put off to the final design and construction phases. We can only hope that the Department of Transportation and its agents will recognize the serious nature of this concern and show the same willingness to consider this issue work with our staff as they have on the other issues.

Please contact me or Dr. Dennis Hardin ([hardind@doacs.state.fl.us](mailto:hardind@doacs.state.fl.us)) or 850/414-8293 if you have additional questions or would like to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

CHARLES H. BRONSON  
COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE



Mike Long, Director  
Division of Forestry

MCL/edh

Cc: Winnie Schreiber, Withlacoochee Center Manager  
Joe Bishop, Forestry Sup. II, Seminole State Forest



## ***Florida Department of Transportation***

**CHARLIE CRIST**  
GOVERNOR

719 South Woodland Boulevard  
Mail Station 501  
DeLand, FL 32720

**STEPHANIE KOPELOUSOS**  
SECRETARY

April 21, 2009

Mr. Albert Gregory, Chief  
Office of Park Planning  
Division of Recreation and Parks  
Florida Department of Environmental Protection  
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-3000

Subject: Wekiva Parkway (SR 429)/SR 46 Realignment  
Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study  
Orange, Lake, and Seminole Counties, Florida  
Financial Management Nos.: 238275-1-22-01 and 240200-1-22-01  
*Section 4(f) Public Lands – Rock Springs Run State Reserve and  
Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park*

Dear Mr. Gregory:

On behalf of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in consultation with the Florida Department of Transportation and the Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority, we hereby request a concurrence letter from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), Division of Recreation and Parks concerning the proposed Wekiva Parkway project and the subject Section 4(f) public lands. As you will recall, we have previously coordinated on this matter and you provided, at our request, an opinion letter (copy attached) dated March 20, 2008 on the minimization of impacts to the subject Section 4(f) lands.

FHWA requires that we obtain a concurrence letter from "the officials having jurisdiction over the Section 4(f) lands" which provides the following specific information concerning the impacts of the proposed Wekiva Parkway on Rock Springs Run State Reserve and Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park:

- 1) the amount and location of the land to be used does not impair the use of the remaining Section 4(f) land, in whole or in part, for its intended purpose;
- 2) the proximity impacts of the project on the remaining Section 4(f) land shall not impair the use of such land for its intended purpose; and
- 3) agreement, in writing, with the assessment of the impacts of the proposed project on, and the proposed mitigation for, the Section 4(f) lands.

To assist you in preparation of the requested concurrence letter, information previously provided to FDEP, Division of Recreation and Parks in October 2007 in the *Determination of Section 4(f) Applicability* document is restated below:

#### **Rock Springs Run State Reserve**

- **Impairment to Section 4(f) Resource:** The amount and location of the land used for the proposed Wekiva Parkway project does not impair the use of the remaining Section 4(f) land, in whole or in part, for its intended purpose. Direct use impacts to Rock Springs Run State Reserve are expected to occur as a result of the proposed improvements. The proposed alignment generally impacts the northern portions of Rock Springs Run State Reserve that are contiguous with existing SR 46. Right-of-way acquisition for roadway and stormwater ponds is estimated at approximately 124 acres of Rock Springs Run State Reserve. The existing public recreational areas (hiking, biking, and canoe trails) will not be impacted by the proposed improvements. The proposed right-of-way requirement of 124 acres represents less than 0.9 of one percent of the total existing 14,011 acres of Rock Springs Run State Reserve.
- **Proximity Impacts:** Proximity impacts, such as water runoff, visual intrusion, access and vibration, are not expected as a result of the proposed Wekiva Parkway project. It is unlikely that the proposed improvements will substantially impair the function, integrity, use, access, value or setting of this resource. Noise impacts due to the proposed project are not anticipated to impact public recreational facilities, such as the campground. Stormwater treatment ponds are planned throughout the proposed corridor to provide treatment and to prevent the degradation of water quality due to the proposed project. Additionally, the primary access points to Rock Springs Run State Reserve on existing SR 46 will remain.
- **Assessment of Impacts Concurrence:** FDOT, District Five sent a written request on October 29, 2007 to the FDEP, Division of Recreation and Parks land managers of the Rock Springs Run State Reserve to provide their opinion on the minimization of project impacts and proposed mitigation measures. The response letter from the FDEP, Division of Recreation and Parks dated March 20, 2008 states "We appreciate your efforts to reduce the adverse effects of the project on Rock Springs Run State Reserve...." and "...it appears that the draft preliminary engineering drawings incorporate the main revisions that have been discussed in the past".

#### **Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park**

- **Impairment to Section 4(f) Resource:** The amount and location of the land used for the proposed Wekiva Parkway project does not impair the use of the remaining Section 4(f) land, in whole or in part, for its intended purpose. Direct use impacts to Lower Wekiva

River Preserve State Park are expected to occur as a result of the proposed Wekiva Parkway alignment. Right-of-way acquisition for the proposed roadway improvement is approximately 4 acres. The proposed right-of-way acquisition of 4 acres represents less than 0.1 of one percent of the total existing 17,405 acres of the Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park. An additional 3 acres will be required for the relocation of the existing 50-foot Florida Gas Transmission easement adjacent to the existing north right-of-way line for SR 46. Temporary impacts will occur within the 50-foot easement as a result of relocating the gas pipeline.

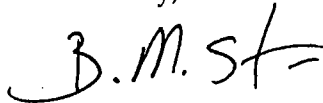
- **Proximity Impacts:** Proximity impacts, such as water runoff, visual intrusion, access and vibration, are not expected as a result of the proposed Wekiva Parkway project. It is unlikely that the proposed improvements will substantially impair the function, integrity, use, access, value or setting of this resource. Primitive horse camping facilities are only provided at the northern entrance to the park south of SR 44, which is outside the project area. Therefore, noise impacts are not expected to impact camping facilities. Stormwater treatment ponds are planned throughout the proposed corridor to provide treatment and to prevent the degradation of water quality due to the proposed project. A potential stormwater pond location on the Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park was removed from consideration in response to FDEP's request to minimize impacts. The existing park access at the southern entrance on SR 46 will be maintained in the proposed condition.
- **Assessment of Impacts Concurrence:** FDOT, District Five sent a written request on October 29, 2007 to the FDEP, Division of Recreation and Parks land managers of the Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park to provide their opinion on the minimization of project impacts and proposed mitigation measures. The response letter from the FDEP, Division of Recreation and Parks dated March 20, 2008 states "We appreciate your efforts to reduce the adverse effects of the project on ....Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park" and "...it appears that the draft preliminary engineering drawings incorporate the main revisions that have been discussed in the past".

We look forward to receipt of the requested concurrence letter from the FDEP Division of Recreation and Parks, which specifically addresses items 1, 2 and 3 above, at your earliest convenience. If you have any questions or require further information, please contact me at (386) 943-5391 or Mr. Mark Callahan of CH2MHILL at (407) 423-0030.



Mr. Albert Gregory  
April 13, 2009  
Page 4

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B.M. Stanger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "B.M." and the last name "Stanger" clearly distinguishable.

Brian Stanger, P.E.  
District Environmental Management Engineer

Copy: Vivian Garfein, Director, FDEP Central District  
Mike Bullock, Director, Florida Park Service  
Warren Poplin, Manager, Wekiva River Basin State Parks  
Mike Snyder, Executive Director, Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority  
Bob Gleason, Environmental Administrator, FDOT District 5  
Mark Callahan, Wekiva Parkway Project Manager, CH2MHILL  
File: 324126 (C19)

Attachments: FDEP, Division of Recreation and Parks letter dated March 20, 2008



## ***Florida Department of Transportation***

**CHARLIE CRIST**  
GOVERNOR

719 South Woodland Boulevard  
Mail Station 501  
DeLand, FL 32720

**STEPHANIE KOPELOUSOS**  
SECRETARY

April 21, 2009

Mr. James R. Karels, Director  
Division of Forestry  
Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services  
3125 Conner Boulevard/C25  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1650

Subject: Wekiva Parkway (SR 429)/SR 46 Realignment  
Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study  
Orange, Lake, and Seminole Counties, Florida  
Financial Management Nos.: 238275-1-22-01 and 240200-1-22-01  
***Section 4(f) Public Lands – Seminole State Forest***

Dear Mr. Karels:

On behalf of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in consultation with the Florida Department of Transportation and the Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority, we hereby request a concurrence letter from the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), Division of Forestry concerning the proposed Wekiva Parkway project and the subject Section 4(f) public lands. We have previously coordinated on this matter with your predecessor Mr. Mike Long, and he provided, at our request, an opinion letter (copy attached) dated May 30, 2008 on the minimization of impacts to the subject Section 4(f) lands.

FHWA requires that we obtain a concurrence letter from "the officials having jurisdiction over the Section 4(f) lands" which provides the following specific information concerning the impacts of the proposed Wekiva Parkway project on Seminole State Forest:

- 1) the amount and location of the land to be used does not impair the use of the remaining Section 4(f) land, in whole or in part, for its intended purpose;
- 2) the proximity impacts of the project on the remaining Section 4(f) land shall not impair the use of such land for its intended purpose; and
- 3) agreement, in writing, with the assessment of the impacts of the proposed project on, and the proposed mitigation for, the Section 4(f) lands.

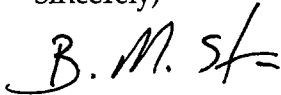
To assist you in preparation of the requested concurrence letter, information previously provided to the Division of Forestry in October 2007 in the *Determination of Section 4(f) Applicability* document is restated below:

- **Impairment to Section 4(f) Resource:** The amount and location of the land used for the proposed Wekiva Parkway project does not impair the use of the remaining Section 4(f) land, in whole, or in part for its intended purpose. Approximately 65 acres of Seminole State Forest will incur direct use impacts due to right-of-way requirements for roadway and stormwater ponds. A section of existing CR 46A from the northern limits of the CR 46A realignment to just northwest of the properties in the vicinity of the "hump" in SR 46 will be removed. As a result, approximately 13 acres of the existing CR 46A right-of-way will be added to Seminole State Forest due to the proposed improvements. The net impacts of approximately 42 acres represent less than 0.2 of one percent of the existing 27,063 acres. Approximately 4 acres will be required for the relocation of the existing 50-foot Florida Gas Transmission easement adjacent to the existing north right-of-way line of SR 46. Temporary impacts will occur within the 50-foot easement as a result of relocating the gas pipeline.
- **Proximity Impacts:** Proximity impacts, such as water runoff, visual intrusion, access and vibration, are not expected as a result of the proposed Wekiva Parkway project. It is unlikely that the proposed improvements will substantially impair the function, integrity, use, access, value or setting of this resource. Noise impacts are not expected to impact the existing primitive camping facilities due to the distance between the facilities and the proposed roadway. Stormwater treatment ponds are planned throughout the proposed corridor to provide treatment and to prevent the degradation of water quality due to the proposed project.
- **Assessment of Impacts Concurrence:** FDOT sent a written request on October 29, 2007 to the Division of Forestry land managers of the Seminole State Forest to provide their opinion on the minimization of project impacts and proposed mitigation measures. The response letter from the Division of Forestry dated May 30, 2008 states "We appreciate your efforts to reduce the adverse effects of the project on the Seminole State Forest and your willingness to work with our staff and address our issues during this process".

We look forward to receipt of the requested concurrence letter from the Division of Forestry, which specifically addresses items 1, 2 and 3 above, at your earliest convenience. If you have any questions or require further information, please contact me at (386) 943-5391 or Mr. Mark Callahan of CH2MHILL at (407) 423-0030.

Mr. James R. Karels  
April 13, 2009  
Page 3

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. M. Stanger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "B." and last name "Stanger" clearly legible.

Brian Stanger, P.E.  
District Environmental Management Engineer

Copy: Joe Bishop, Forestry Supervisor II, Seminole State Forest  
Mike Snyder, Executive Director, Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority  
Bob Gleason, Environmental Administrator, FDOT District 5  
Mark Callahan, Wekiva Parkway Project Manager, CH2MHILL  
File: 324126 (C19)

Attachments: FDACS, Division of Forestry letter dated May 30, 2008





Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services  
CHARLES H. BRONSON, Commissioner  
The Capitol • Tallahassee, FL 32399-0800  
[www.doacs.state.fl.us](http://www.doacs.state.fl.us)

Please Respond to:  
Florida Division of Forestry  
3125 Conner Boulevard  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1650  
Phone: 850-488-4274

May 27, 2009

Mr. Brian Stanger, P.E.  
District Environmental Management Engineer  
Florida Department of Transportation  
719 South Woodland Boulevard  
Mail Station 501  
DeLand, Florida 32720

Subject: Section 4(f) Public Lands – Seminole State Forest  
Wekiva Parkway (SR 429)/SR 46 Realignment  
Financial Management Nos.: 238275-1-22-01 and 240200-1-22-01

Dear Mr. Stanger:

This is in response to your letter of April 21, 2009, requesting a concurrence letter from the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Forestry (DOF) concerning the subject referenced above. We appreciate your continued coordination with DOF on this project and, as stated previously, your efforts to reduce the adverse effects of the project on Seminole State Forest. As we stated in our letter to you of May 30, 2008, we believe the most significant impact will be to fire management of the public land in the vicinity of this project. Impacts on fire management seriously impair the use of the Section 4(f) land for its intended use. Because this issue has not been specifically addressed, we are unable to issue a full concurrence letter at this time.

The inhibitory impacts on prescribed burning programs by transportation facilities are well-demonstrated. Inhibitions to prescribed burning often result in the accumulation of fuels to dangerous levels that then result in wildfires. Smoke on the highway from either source is a safety hazard for motorists. Successional changes in vegetation due to declines in prescribed fire decrease the habitat suitability for many wildlife species known to inhabit Seminole State Forest, such as the Florida scrub jay. Wildfires cause serious damage to forests and impair their use for recreation and silvicultural management. We would rather not postpone the address of this issue until later in the design effort and believe it needs to be addressed by commitments sooner rather than later.



Mr. Brian Stanger, P.E.  
May 27, 2009  
Page Two

As referenced in our May 30, 2008, letter, we recommended installation of permanent, overarching, lighted, variable message signs at each end of the segment through public lands. Possible locations for these are west of the interchange that is west of Wildlife Crossing 1, and east of the Wekiva River Crossing. We believe these signs are essential to notify motorists of dangerous smoke conditions on the Parkway and to reduce speed or even to reroute traffic under the most severe conditions. A protocol for accessing the signs should be developed that involves the DOF, Division of Recreation and Parks in the Department of Environmental Protection, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the Florida Highway Patrol, DOT and local law enforcement agencies. Also, as stated in our May 30 letter, we believe one or more remote weather stations should be placed in this segment. The data from these stations should be accessible by agencies that conduct prescribed burning and that fight wildfires in order to obtain localized weather information that can be used in conducting burns or fighting wildfires.

Referring to our May 30, 2008, letter, we agree that many important steps have been taken to minimize and mitigate the effects of this project. We are very concerned that the impact to fire management has not been addressed at all and is not even mentioned in Endangered Species Biological Assessment. As previously stated, we believe that impacts to fire management are the most important and long-lasting impacts to wildlife, recreation and driver safety. These impacts are not mitigated by land acquisition.

We can concur that the amount and location of the land to be used does not impair the use of the remaining Section 4(f) land. The approximately 65 acres of direct use impacts due to right-of-way requirements for roadway and stormwater ponds are probably the minimum that could be impacted and still construct a road that balances the interests of these conservation lands and transportation requirements. Approximately 13 acres of the existing CR 46A right-of-way will be removed and added to the Seminole State Forest. An additional 4 acres will be required for the relocation of the existing Florida Gas Transmission easement.

Pertinent to this point, we would like to have further discussion concerning the stormwater treatment pond located just west of the Wekiva River crossing and north of the Parkway. Our preference would be to relocate this pond and make the parcel part of the State Forest. Alternatively, we believe the area should be evaluated for the potential to use a flowage easement similar to what is being engineered for the widening of Interstate 75 through the Croom Tract of the Withlacoochee State Forest. This alternative uses flowage easements to direct stormwater to existing wetlands and depressions and negates the need for massive and unsightly dry holding areas. If there is no feasible solution but to construct the holding area, we would like to see the pond engineered to look as natural as possible to maintain visual quality objectives. Doing so would involve construction of a firebreak and fencing only along the southern boundary with the Parkway and would allow burning up to the edge of the holding area on the north, west and east boundaries.

Mr. Brian Stanger, P.E.  
May 27, 2009  
Page Three

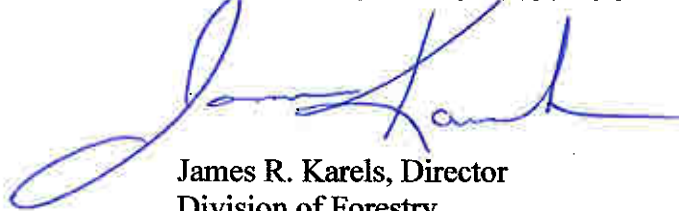
We cannot fully concur that the proximity impacts of the project on the remaining Section 4(f) land will not impair the use of such land for its intended purpose because the issue of smoke management has not been addressed, as described above. We can concur that proximity impacts, such as water runoff, noise, access and vibration, are not expected as a result of the proposed Wekiva Parkway Project. Unless the issue of smoke management is addressed, we believe the proposed project will substantially impair the function, integrity, use, value and setting of this resource.

This project in its current form will inhibit our ability to conduct prescribed burning. Without prescribed fire, fuels will accumulate and an area already known for its wildfire severity will suffer increased wildfire frequency. Smoke events from wildfires are very likely to affect the safety of motorists on this highway.

We would be happy to have further discussions with you on this subject. If you have any questions, please contact me or Dr. Dennis Hardin, Forest Ecologist (850/414-8293; [hardind@doacs.state.fl.us](mailto:hardind@doacs.state.fl.us)) or Mr. Joe Bishop, SSF Forestry Supervisor II (352/360-6677; [bishopj@doacs.state.fl.us](mailto:bishopj@doacs.state.fl.us)).

Sincerely,

**CHARLES H. BRONSON**  
**COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "James R. Karels", is written over the printed name and title.

James R. Karels, Director  
Division of Forestry

JRK/edh

cc: Dennis Hardin, Forest Ecologist, DOF  
Joe Bishop, Forestry Supervisor II, Seminole State Forest  
Winnie Schreiber, Withlacoochee Forestry Center Manager  
Bob Gleason, Environmental Administrator, FDOT District 5  
Mark Callahan, Wekiva Parkway Project Manager, CH2MHILL  
Tim Breault, Director, Division of Habitat & Species Conservation, FFWCC  
Albert Gregory, Division of Recreation & Parks, FDEP/ DSL  
David Hankla, USFWS



## *Florida Department of Transportation*

CHARLIE CRIST  
GOVERNOR

719 South Woodland Boulevard  
Mail Station 501  
DeLand, FL 32720

STEPHANIE KOPELOUSOS  
SECRETARY

May 29, 2009

Mr. James R. Karels, Director  
Division of Forestry  
Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services  
3125 Conner Boulevard/C-25  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1650

Subject: Wekiva Parkway (SR 429)/SR 46 Realignment  
Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study  
Orange, Lake, and Seminole Counties, Florida  
Financial Management Nos.: 238275-1-22-01 and 240200-1-22-01  
*Section 4(f) Public Lands - Seminole State Forest*

Dear Mr. Karels:

Thank you for your correspondence of May 27, 2009 (copy attached) in response to our request for a concurrence letter from the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Forestry (DOF) concerning the proposed Wekiva Parkway project and the subject Section 4(f) public lands. We appreciate the concurrence provided by DOF on certain specific items. This letter is meant to address the concerns you expressed, especially in regard to fire management.

Over the past three years, we have coordinated with Mr. Joe Bishop, Forestry Supervisor II for Seminole State Forest, during the development of Wekiva Parkway alignment and access alternatives. We have discussed maintaining existing access points to Seminole State Forest and the provision of additional or replacement access, as appropriate. We have coordinated with Mr. Bishop, as well as the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) Division of Recreation and Parks, to make certain that proposed project bridges will provide sufficient vertical clearance to accommodate fire management vehicles and equipment. Mr. Bishop has made it clear, as has DOF in the letter of May 30, 2008 and in your letter of May 27, 2009, that prescribed burns and smoke management are of paramount importance. That is understood and the significance to DOF is recognized by FDOT.

Since PD&E Studies are based on preliminary engineering of conceptual alternatives, specific items such as the two variable message signs suggested by DOF are usually not addressed until the final design phase. However, we will certainly commit to address that issue, in close coordination with DOF, early in the development of project design and construction plans. At FDOT, as at DOF, safety is always the primary consideration.



Mr. James R. Karels  
May 29, 2009  
Page 2

With regard to the stormwater pond and your suggested alternative for a flowage easement, we have previously discussed that type of approach in this portion of the project area with FDEP Central District staff. It may be a viable option, particularly in the vicinity of state conservation and park lands, for more compatibility with the natural environment. FDEP has indicated that approach should be further detailed and discussed during final drainage design, in order to adequately address any related permitting issues.

We hope this correspondence is responsive to your expressed concerns. We look forward to continued coordination with DOF as this important project progresses. If you have any questions or require further information, please contact me at (386) 943-5391 or by email at [Brian.Stanger@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:Brian.Stanger@dot.state.fl.us).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. M. Stanger", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Brian Stanger, P.E.  
District Environmental Management Engineer

Copy: Joe Bishop, Forestry Supervisor II, Seminole State Forest  
Dennis Hardin, Forest Ecologist, Division of Forestry  
Mike Snyder, Executive Director, Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority  
Bob Gleason, Environmental Administrator, FDOT District 5  
Mark Callahan, Wekiva Parkway Project Manager, CH2MHILL  
File: 324126 (C19)

Attachment: Division of Forestry letter dated May 27, 2009

## **Information on Revision of the Wekiva Parkway Alternative in East Lake County\***

The Wekiva Parkway & Protection Act (Florida Statutes, 2004) required that SR 46 in east Lake County west of the Wekiva River not be a continuous roadway for environmental reasons. As recommended by the Lake County Commission, the Wekiva River Basin Commission, and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (in keeping with the mandates of the Act), the plans for Wekiva Parkway in east Lake County eliminated SR 46 as a through road from the Neighborhood Lakes area eastward to the Wekiva River. Those are the Wekiva Parkway plans that the Division of Forestry (DOF) has seen previously in our Section 4(f) coordination. At the time the Act was passed, it was assumed the Wekiva Parkway would not be a tolled roadway. However, after an extensive financial analysis estimated the total cost of construction of the project at \$1.8 billion, and with declining transportation dollars available to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), it became evident that the Wekiva Parkway from SR 429 near Apopka in northwest Orange County through east Lake County to I-4 near Sanford in west Seminole County would not be financially feasible without tolls.

Citizens in the east Lake County area who live and work along existing SR 46 expressed concerns over having to pay a toll for a local trip. Local and state elected officials also expressed those concerns on behalf of their constituents. In mid 2009, the Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority (OOCEA) and FDOT began analyzing options to provide a non-tolled service road in east Lake County along the Wekiva Parkway route. In response to those citizen and elected official concerns, a service road concept has been developed. The service road, which would be parallel to and on the north side of the Wekiva Parkway in east Lake County, is within the 300 foot right-of-way previously identified for the Wekiva Parkway (attached are two graphics which depict the alignment and the typical section; please zoom in on the PDF of the alignment for greater detail). The alignment of the Wekiva Parkway has not been changed. The previous Wekiva Parkway alternative had two local access interchanges west of the Wekiva River in east Lake County due to the elimination of SR 46. With the service road, those interchanges are no longer needed and impacts to Seminole State Forest lands have been reduced by approximately 8.2 acres, as shown below.

### Estimated Impact on Seminole State Forest Land

Previous Wekiva Parkway Alternative	64.7 acres
Wekiva Parkway Alternative with Service Road	<u>56.5 acres</u>
Estimated Impact Reduction	8.2 acres

A Public Workshop on the service road alternative was held in Sorrento, Florida on December 17, 2009. FDOT and OOCEA are now moving ahead to revise the previous recommended Preferred Alternative for Wekiva Parkway in east Lake County to include the service road. We have been coordinating with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on the programmatic Section 4(f) evaluation for public lands, which includes Seminole State Forest. After you have had an opportunity to review this information on the service road and the resultant reduced impacts to Seminole State Forest, FHWA has indicated they would like to meet with DOF, FDOT and OOCEA in Tallahassee to discuss resolving the outstanding DOF concerns so we may reach agreement on Section 4(f) concurrence for potential proximity impacts and mitigation.

I will contact you about the scheduling of and arrangements for that meeting with FHWA. In the meantime, if DOF has any questions about the service road concept, please contact Mr. Dave Lewis of CH2M HILL at (407)423-0001 Ext. 281.

**\* Information provided by Bob Gleason, FDOT District 5 to James Karels, DOF Director and Joe Bishop, Seminole State Forest Supervisor on February 8, 2010.**

## **Information on Revision of the Wekiva Parkway Alternative in East Lake County\***

The Wekiva Parkway & Protection Act (Florida Statutes, 2004) required that SR 46 in east Lake County west of the Wekiva River not be a continuous roadway for environmental reasons. As recommended by the Lake County Commission, the Wekiva River Basin Commission, and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (in keeping with the mandates of the Act), the plans for Wekiva Parkway in east Lake County eliminated SR 46 as a through road from the Neighborhood Lakes area eastward to the Wekiva River. Those are the Wekiva Parkway plans that Wekiva River Basin State Parks management has seen previously in our Section 4(f) coordination. At the time the Act was passed, it was assumed the Wekiva Parkway would not be a tolled roadway. However, after an extensive financial analysis estimated the total cost of construction of the project at \$1.8 billion, and with declining transportation dollars available to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), it became evident that the Wekiva Parkway from SR 429 near Apopka in northwest Orange County through east Lake County to I-4 near Sanford in west Seminole County would not be financially feasible without tolls.

Citizens in the east Lake County area who live and work along existing SR 46 expressed concerns over having to pay a toll for a local trip. Local and state elected officials also expressed those concerns on behalf of their constituents. In mid 2009, the Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority (OOCEA) and FDOT began analyzing options to provide a non-tolled service road in east Lake County along the Wekiva Parkway route. In response to those citizen and elected official concerns, a service road concept has been developed. The service road, which would be parallel to and on the north side of the Wekiva Parkway in east Lake County, is within the 300 foot right-of-way previously identified for the Wekiva Parkway (attached are two graphics which depict the alignment and the typical section; please zoom in on the PDF of the alignment for greater detail). The alignment of the Wekiva Parkway has not been changed. The previous Wekiva Parkway alternative had two local access interchanges west of the Wekiva River in east Lake County due to the elimination of SR 46. With the service road, those interchanges are no longer needed and impacts to Rock Springs Run State Reserve (RSRSR) lands have been reduced by approximately 29 acres, as shown below.

### Estimated Impact on RSRSR Land

Previous Wekiva Parkway Alternative	124.8 acres
Wekiva Parkway Alternative with Service Road	<u>95.8 acres</u>
Estimated Impact Reduction	29.0 acres

A Public Workshop on the service road alternative was held in Sorrento, Florida on December 17, 2009. FDOT and OOCEA are now moving ahead to revise the previous recommended Preferred Alternative for Wekiva Parkway in east Lake County to include the service road. With regard to this revision, FDOT and OOCEA have been coordinating with the Federal Highway Administration on the programmatic Section 4(f) evaluation for public lands, which includes RSRSR. There has been recent coordination in Tallahassee between FDOT, OOCEA and FDEP Deputy Secretary Ballard on the service road concept and the resultant reduced impacts to RSRSR. Also, FDOT and OOCEA have been discussing with Deputy Secretary Ballard and FDEP legal counsel a letter agreement on Section 4(f) concurrence for potential proximity impacts and mitigation.

This information is meant to provide an update on activities to the Wekiva River Basin State Parks management team. If you have any questions about the service road concept, please contact Mr. Dave Lewis of CH2M HILL at (407)423-0001 Ext. 281 or by email at [David.Lewis2@ch2m.com](mailto:David.Lewis2@ch2m.com).

***\*Information provided to FDEP, Division of Recreation and Parks (Wekiva River Basin State Parks Manager Warren Poplin) on February 8, 2010.***



## *Florida Department of Transportation*

CHARLIE CRIST  
GOVERNOR

719 South Woodland Boulevard  
Mail Station 503  
DeLand, FL 32720

STEPHANIE KOPELOUSOS  
SECRETARY

March 25, 2010

Mr. James R. Karels, Director  
Division of Forestry  
Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services  
3125 Conner Boulevard/C25  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1650

Subject: Wekiva Parkway (SR 429)/SR 46 Realignment  
Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study  
*Letter of Commitment Concerning Potential Impacts  
to Section 4(f) Public Lands - Seminole State Forest*

Dear Mr. Karels:

As you know from previous coordination and correspondence, District Five of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority (OOCEA) are jointly conducting the subject PD&E Study for the proposed Wekiva Parkway project. As an integral part of that process, FDOT and OOCEA have coordinated on preliminary engineering over the past several years with Mr. Joe Bishop, the Division of Forestry (DOF) Supervisor for the Seminole State Forest, in order to minimize the potential impacts of the project on Seminole State Forest lands. We recently provided to DOF the attached information on the revised alternative in east Lake County which includes a service road for local trips. The service road allows the removal of two previously proposed local access interchanges which, along with the estimated 13 acres of existing CR 46A right-of-way that will be added to SSF as a result of the proposed project, further reduces the potential impact to Seminole State Forest to a net of approximately 45 acres. We have also communicated with you and Mr. Bishop during the on-going programmatic Section 4(f) evaluation process, in which you indicated in previous correspondence (please see attached letter of May 27, 2009) that certain specific commitments must be made by FDOT and/or OOCEA in order to gain DOF's full Section 4(f) concurrence.

As previously discussed with DOF, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) requires that officials with jurisdiction over Section 4(f) lands must fully concur with the following three items concerning potential impacts:

- 1) the amount and location of the land to be used does not impair the use of the remaining Section 4(f) land, in whole or in part, for its intended purpose;



- 2) the proximity impacts of the project on the remaining Section 4(f) land shall not impair the use of such land for its intended purpose; and
- 3) agreement, in writing, with the assessment of the impacts of the proposed project on, and the proposed mitigation for, the Section 4(f) lands.

In your letter of May 27, 2009, you stated that DOF fully concurs with Item 1 above. However, you indicated that DOF could not fully concur with Item 2 or Item 3 above. In order to gain DOF concurrence your letter listed the following concerns to be resolved:

- Smoke management to avoid impairment of intended use
- Avoid impairment of ability to conduct prescribed burning
- Relocation of a stormwater treatment pond or use of a flowage easement instead

Your letter requested that FDOT and/or OOCEA commit to the following specific items prior to the design and construction phases of the proposed project:

- Installation of permanent, overarching, lighted, variable message signs at each end of the segment through public lands to notify motorists of dangerous smoke conditions;
- Placement of one or more remote weather stations in this segment to obtain localized weather information that can be used in conducting prescribed burns or fighting wildfires; and
- Relocation of a proposed stormwater treatment pond located just west of the Wekiva River and north of the Wekiva Parkway, or as an alternative, evaluation of the potential for use of a flowage easement to direct stormwater to wetlands and depressions to avoid the need for an unsightly holding area.

We have recently had further discussions with Mr. Bishop concerning the requested commitments. As a result of that coordination, FDOT and OOCEA agree to make those commitments. In return we request a letter from DOF signed by you which provides full Section 4(f) concurrence with each of the three above-listed items required by FHWA. We request that DOF specifically states in the concurrence letter that these FDOT and OOCEA commitments are adequate mitigation for the impacts of the Wekiva Parkway project on Seminole State Forest lands.

FDOT and OOCEA hereby formally commit to DOF that the following will be provided for and/or addressed in the design and construction phases of the proposed Wekiva Parkway project:

- Installation of two permanent overhead variable message signs that can be utilized to notify motorists of dangerous smoke conditions;
- Assistance to DOF in the provision of one remote weather station to obtain data that can be used in conducting prescribed burns or fighting wildfires;

- Addressing with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection during the drainage design/permitting phase the usage of flowage easements in state forest, park and conservation lands, and;
- Actively supporting involvement of a designated DOF representative in the design and construction phases of those portions of the proposed project in the Seminole State Forest area to avoid or ameliorate any proximity impacts.

We look forward to receipt of your concurrence letter.

If there are any questions, please contact either Noranne Downs at (386)943-5474 or by email at [noranne.downs@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:noranne.downs@dot.state.fl.us) or Mike Snyder at 407-690-5311 or by email at [snyderm@oocea.com](mailto:snyderm@oocea.com).

Sincerely,



Noranne B. Downs, P.E.  
Secretary, District Five  
Florida Department of Transportation



Mike Snyder, P.E.  
Executive Director  
Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority

Attachments: 1) Information on revised Wekiva Parkway alternative in east Lake County  
provided to DOF on February 8, 2010  
2) DOF letter dated May 27, 2009

Copy: George Lovett, FDOT D5  
Brian Stanger, FDOT D5  
Joseph Berenis, OOCEA  
Joe Bishop, DOF  
Dennis Hardin, DOF  
Mark Callahan, CH2M HILL  
File - PN 324126





# Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Marjory Stoneman Douglas Building  
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000

Charlie Crist  
Governor

Jeff Kottkamp  
Lt. Governor

Michael W. Sole  
Secretary

March 30, 2010

Ms. Noranne B. Downs, P.E.  
Secretary, District Five  
Florida Department of Transportation  
Mail Station 503  
719 South Woodland Boulevard  
DeLand, FL 32720-6834

DOCEA 10APR 2 AM 10:07

**Subject: Wekiva Parkway (SR 429)/SR 46 Realignment Impacts on  
Section 4(f) Lands - Rock Springs Run State Reserve and  
Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park**

Dear Ms. Downs:

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) has reviewed the information on the subject impacts provided in previous coordination and discussions with you, including your related request for concurrence. We understand for the programmatic evaluation the Federal Highway Administration requires that officials with jurisdiction over Section 4(f) lands must fully concur with each of the following items concerning the impacts of the proposed Wekiva Parkway project:

- 1) the amount and location of the land to be used does not impair the use of the remaining Section 4(f) land, in whole or in part, for its intended purpose;
- 2) the proximity impacts of the project on the remaining Section 4(f) land shall not impair the use of such land for its intended purpose; and
- 3) agreement, in writing, with the assessment of the impacts of the proposed project on, and the proposed mitigation for, the Section 4(f) lands.

We have reviewed the information provided and the commitments made to us by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) regarding the subject impacts. In summary, the proposed Wekiva Parkway project would require approximately 97 acres of the Rock Springs Run State Reserve (RSRSR) and approximately 4 acres of the Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park (LWRPSP). The 97 acres is less than 0.7 percent of the total acreage of RSRSR, and the 4 acres is less than 0.1 percent of the total acreage of LWRPSP. We agree that the amount and location of the land to be used in RSRSR and LWRPSP will not impair the use of the remaining Section 4(f) land, in whole or in part, for its intended purpose. Therefore, FDEP fully concurs with Item 1 above.

Ms. Noranne B. Downs  
March 30, 2010  
Page 2

With regard to Item 2 above, FDOT has committed to the avoidance of any proximity impacts which might impair the use of RSRSR and LWRPSP for their intended purpose. Also, FDOT has committed to actively support the involvement of FDEP in the proposed project during the final design and construction phases to coordinate on ensuring the avoidance or amelioration of any such proximity impacts. Therefore, FDEP fully concurs with Item 2 above.

With regard to Item 3 above, FDEP recognizes that FDOT has accommodated our requests during the preliminary engineering phase to avoid or minimize impacts to RSRSR and LWRPSP, and we agree with the assessment of the impacts on the subject Section 4(f) lands. FDEP appreciates that FDOT has included a total of approximately 8,500 feet of wildlife bridging in the proposed project to enhance habitat connectivity and the natural resource value of state lands in the Wekiva River Basin. Furthermore, FDEP recognizes that FDOT and the Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority have made substantial contributions toward acquisition of conservation lands as a part of the Wekiva Parkway project. FDEP hereby confirms that the acquisition of those conservation lands within the Wekiva-Ocala Greenway area is, on an acre-for-acre, value-for-value basis, accepted as adequate mitigation for the impacts of the Wekiva Parkway project on RSRSR and LWRPSP. FDEP is prepared to strongly recommend to the Acquisition and Restoration Council that the acquisition of such conservation lands in the project area on an acre-for-acre, value-for-value basis be accepted by them as adequate mitigation for the impacts of the Preferred Alternative for the Wekiva Parkway. With their concurrence of the staff recommendation FDEP can fully concur with Item 3 above.

Please contact me if you have any questions. I can be reached at (850)245-2043 or via email at [bob.g.ballard@dep.state.fl.us](mailto:bob.g.ballard@dep.state.fl.us).

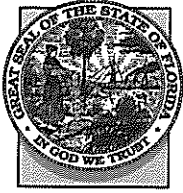
Sincerely,



Bob Ballard  
Deputy Secretary  
Land and Recreation

Cc: ☒ Mr. Mike Snyder, Executive Director, OOCEA  
Mr. George Lovett, Director of Transportation Development, FDOT, District 5  
Ms. Deborah Poppell, Director, Division of State Lands, FDEP  
Mr. Mike Bullock, Director, Division of Recreation and Parks, FDEP  
Mr. Lee Edmiston, Director, Office of Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas, FDEP





Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services  
CHARLES H. BRONSON, Commissioner  
The Capitol • Tallahassee, FL 32399-0800  
www.doacs.state.fl.us

Please Respond to:  
Florida Division of Forestry  
3125 Conner Boulevard  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1650  
Telephone: 850-488-4274

April 9, 2010

Ms. Noranne B. Downs, P.E.  
Secretary, District Five  
Florida Department of Transportation  
Mail Station 503  
719 South Woodland Boulevard  
Deland, Florida 32720-6834

Subject: Wekiva Parkway (SR 429)/SR 46 Realignment Impacts Section 4(f) Lands –  
Seminole State Forest

Dear Ms. Downs:

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Forestry (DOF) has received and reviewed your letter dated March 25, 2010 which provides specific commitments and requests our full concurrence related to the subject impacts. We understand for the programmatic evaluation the Federal Highway Administration requires that officials with jurisdiction over Section 4(f) lands must fully concur with each of the following items concerning the impacts of the proposed Wekiva Parkway project:

- 1) the amount and location of the land to be used does not impair the use of the remaining Section 4(f) land, in whole or in part, for its intended purpose;
- 2) the proximity impacts of the project on the remaining Section 4(f) land shall not impair the use of such land for its intended purpose; and
- 3) agreement, in writing, with the assessment of the impacts of the proposed project on, and the proposed mitigation for, the Section 4(f) lands.

We have reviewed the information and commitments that the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority (OOCEA) provided to us regarding the subject impacts. In summary, the proposed Wekiva Parkway project would require approximately 58 acres of Seminole State Forest (SSF) lands. The 58 acres is about 0.21 percent of the total acreage of SSF. We agree that the amount and location of the land to be used in SSF will not impair the use of the remaining Section 4(f) land, in whole or in part, for its intended purpose. Therefore, DOF fully concurs with Item 1 above.



Ms. Noranne Downs  
April 9, 2010  
Page Two

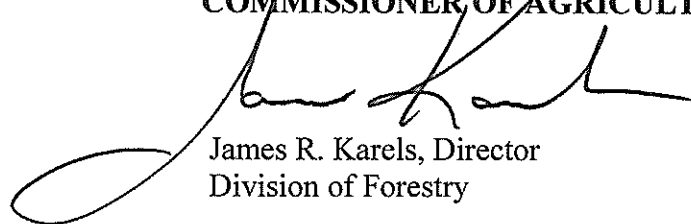
With regard to Item 2, FDOT and/or OOCEA have committed to the avoidance of any proximity impacts, particularly smoke management issues, which might impair the use of SSF for its intended purpose. Also, FDOT and/or OOCEA have committed to actively support the involvement of DOF in the proposed project during the final design and construction phases to coordinate on ensuring the avoidance or amelioration of any such proximity impacts. We believe the potential acreage impacts of the Wekiva Parkway to our prescribed fire program and to smoke management of both prescribed fires and wildfires are more significant to the impairment of use of these Section 4f lands than the impacts that will occur as result of the actual foot print of the facility. The information and general commitments made by FDOT and OOCEA, and the processes of developing trust, communication and involvement we are establishing show that all parties are committed to developing specific mitigation for these impacts as the project proceeds. General mitigation approaches are addressed in the paragraph below. Therefore, DOF fully concurs with Item 2 above.

With regard to Item 3, DOF recognizes that FDOT and OOCEA have made important efforts to accommodate our requests during the preliminary engineering phase to avoid or minimize impacts to SSF, and we agree with the assessment of the impacts on the subject Section 4(f) lands. Furthermore, FDOT and/or OOCEA have made commitments in a letter of March 25, 2010, to Mr. James R. Karels, Director of DOF, and in both prior and subsequent conversations. These commitments are to install two permanent overhead variable message signs that can be used to notify motorists of dangerous smoke conditions, to provide funding up to \$75,000 (in 2010 dollars) either as advance or reimbursement to assist DOF in the provision of one or more remote weather stations to obtain data that can be used in conducting prescribed burns or fighting wildfires, and to address the usage of flowage easements during the drainage design/permitting phase. DOF hereby confirms that these commitments are adequate mitigation for the impacts of the Wekiva Parkway project on SSF. Therefore, DOF fully concurs with Item 3 above.

Please contact me if you have any questions. I may be reached at (850) 922-0135 or via email, [karelsj@doacs.state.fl.us](mailto:karelsj@doacs.state.fl.us).

Sincerely,

**CHARLES H. BRONSON**  
**COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE**



James R. Karels, Director  
Division of Forestry

JRK/edh

cc: Winnie Schreiber, Withlacoochee Center Manager  
Joe Bishop, Seminole State Forest Forestry Supervisor  
Dr. Dennis Hardin, Forest Ecologist